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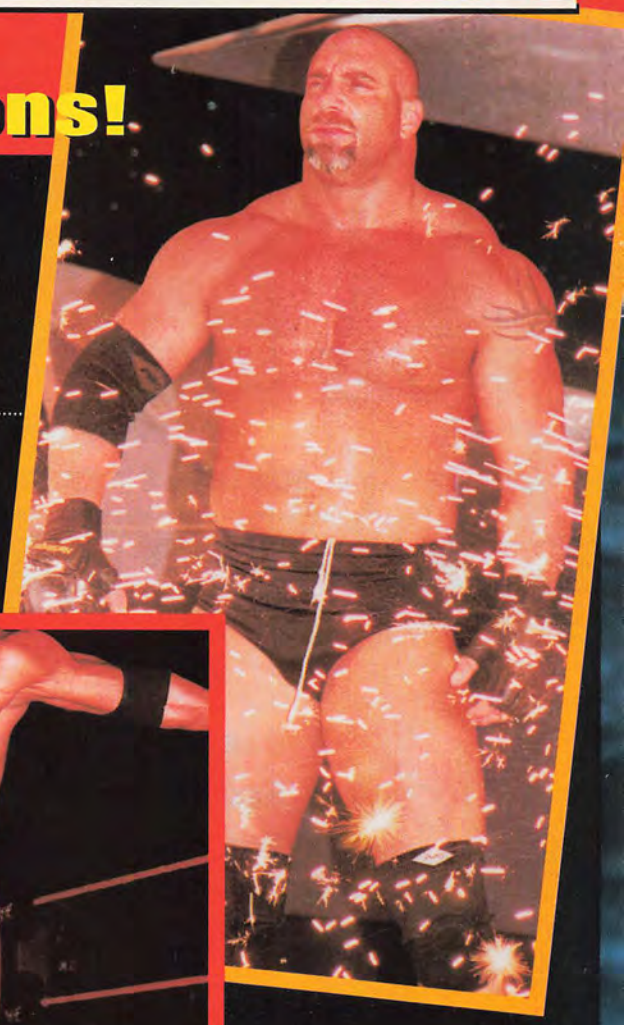

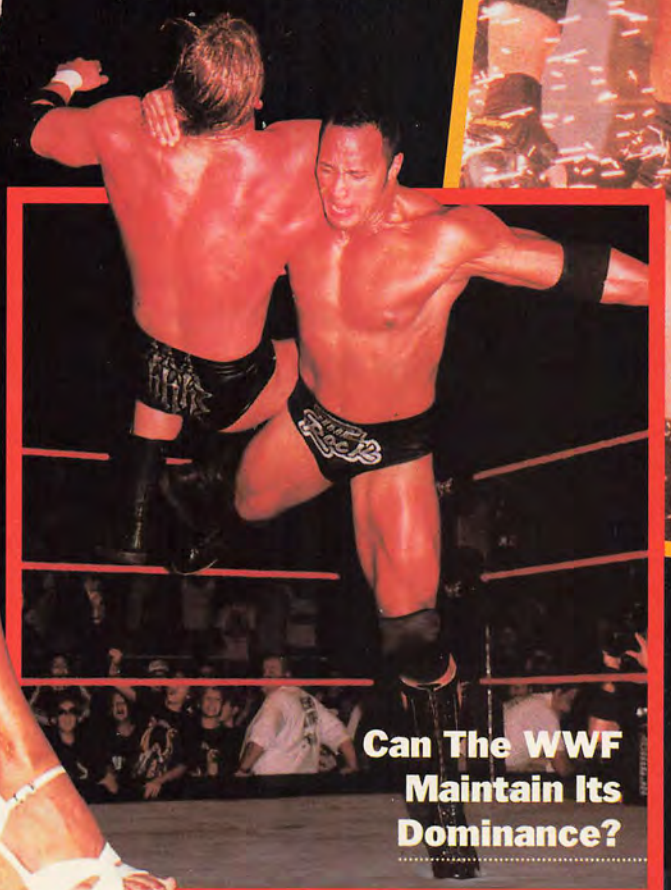

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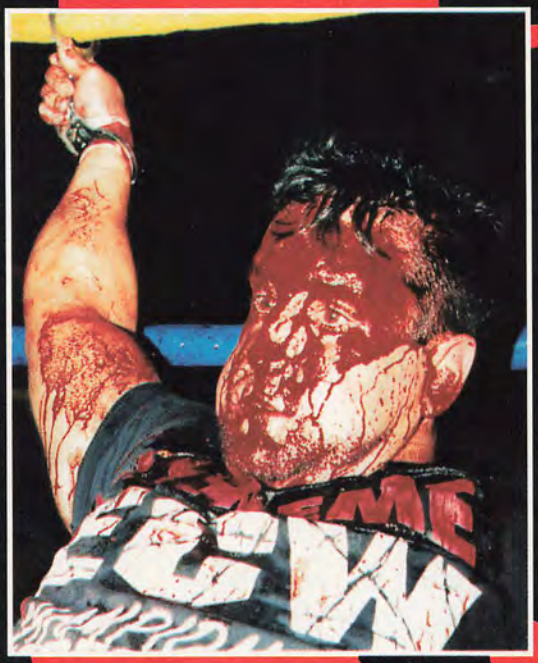

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FROM THE DESK OF...

SHORTLY AFTER TED TURNER purchased what today is World Championship Wrestling from Jim Crockett a dozen years ago, I sat in the office of the new man in charge, Jack Petrik, and discussed the future of the company. Petrik, though not a wrestling guy, was one of the highest ranking TBS executives and obviously a bright man. He knew that with proper management, Turner Broadcasting's new acquisition could do a lot better than it had been doing. In fact, Jim Crockett Promotions had been in financial trouble, and the primary reason Turner got into the wrestling business was to protect the Saturday and Sunday night wrestling shows that were a staple of TBS' weekend programming.

What struck me about Petrik was the manner in which he viewed his company's position vs. the acknowledged industry leader, the WWF. Even with the force of Turner's resources behind him, he seemed very content to remain number two, as long as there was money to be made. In response to my question of whether TBS had planned to be an aggressive competitor to Vince McMahon and the WWF, Petrik said: "We're not butting heads with Vince. Vince is the kingpin. There's room for both of us. If we can have a fraction of Vince's success, why, I think we'd be very happy."

One of the first moves Petrik made was hiring Jim Herd to run the day-to-day operations. That was the first in a series of company blunders that would outlive the stays of Petrik and Herd and take them to the Eric Bischoff era. Bischoff will be remembered by some in a negative light, but I'll always be an admirer of his because he was the first WCW leader to have the guts to take on the WWF head-on. He was the one who conceptualized *WCW Monday Nitro* and the one whose decision it was to run it opposite the WWF's tremendously successful *Monday Night Raw*.

He put his neck on the line by convincing Turner that money spent today would not only help grow the company, but put the WWF in a position in which it would have to cripple itself financially to remain competitive. As it turns out, Bischoff was half right. He was able to grow the company, but he sorely underestimated the resourcefulness of Vince McMahon and wound up making mistakes that brought about his own demise.

At the time he was removed as WCW president, WCW was losing the war with the WWF—but at least there was a war. Even if Jack Petrik and his successors had intentions of taking on the WWF, they never made them public because they knew that if they set lofty goals, they would have to make good on those goals or be accountable for their own failures. Bischoff believed complacency and failure walked hand in hand.

It bothers me that WCW has relinquished the 10 o'clock hour on Monday nights to the WWF. That, coupled with the move of *Thunder* to Wednesday night, sends a clear message that WCW no longer has the confidence to take on its rival head-on. You've heard sports announcers throw out that cliched sentence, "They're not playing to win; they're playing not to lose." Well, that fits WCW's approach perfectly. They don't think they can beat the WWF anymore, so they're doing all they can to stave off further losses.

Vince Russo was a strong advocate of a streamlined *Nitro,* but when he made the suggestion he never could have imagined that the network would have trimmed the final hour. Keep in mind also that the inevitable ratings increase for the WWF in the final hour of *Raw* is going to push WCW farther behind Russo's former employer.

While Russo cannot be happy about this, I wonder what impact it's going to have on the psyche of the wrestlers. For too long, they were told that it was okay to accept the WWF's spillover business. Then they had a taste of battle and liked it very much. Now they're being told again it's okay to be second best, as long as everybody's making money. Well, that short-term thinking is what felled every WCW executive prior to Eric Bischoff. Maybe the wrestlers need a little more from "the office" than dental insurance.

Stu Saks
Publisher

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1999
THE YEAR IN WRESTLING
"I Love Him...But You Love To Hate Him"
DDP: MOST HATED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

When "Diamond" Dallas Page found out that he was voted 1999's Most Hated Wrestler of the Year by the readers of *PWI*, he couldn't get the smile (or was it a scowl?) off his face. Page immediately called our offices and volunteered to pose with his plaque and his beautiful wife, Kimberly, for the cover.

What resulted was one of the most beautiful year-end covers ever. After the March 2000 issue hit the newsstands, though, the legions of DDP haters filled our mailbox, our e-mail, and our voice mail with comments that ranged from nice to nasty.

"Look at DDP acting all smug on your cover," wrote Daisy Workman of Reno, Nevada. "He's actually proud of that award."

"I don't like the guy, but I'll give the devil his due," e-mailed Chris Stimson of Danbury, Connecticut. "He's the baddest of the bad guys."

"Page has just gone from most hated to least hated in my eyes," said Trent Reed of Sunrise, Florida. "Anytime he does anything that gets Kim's picture taken, I'm all for it."

HOGAN FAN REMEMBERS...

I was thumbing through some magazines at a local store, and I opened yours. I don't closely follow wrestling anymore, but it was all I cared about when I was younger. It made me happy to see that Hulk Hogan had returned to his true self. As a child, I looked up to him. He was awesome. Although he is aging, I hope "Hulkamania II" lasts as long as possible and that Hogan retires a hero. That is what he will always be remembered for.

MATT WHITE
Moore, OK

Many of today's wrestling fans grew up watching Hulk Hogan destroy all that was evil in the WWF. Reader Matt White was no different. White hopes that when Hogan finally retires, it's as a hero.

MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

The wedding between Triple-H and Stephanie McMahon was a sham from the very start. Those two lovebirds need to realize how many people they've offended with their actions. And if they ever really do get married to somebody else, how do they explain this relationship?

STEVE MENNEN
Midway, MO

HIGH ON HEYMAN

I have to say that I loved the interview with Paul Heyman in the February 2000 issue ("Press Conference"). I have been a fan and admirer of Paul Heyman since the late-'80s, when he came onto the scene in WCW with the "original" Midnight Express and the S.S.T. I think The Dangerous Alliance was one of the best stables of all-time. I think Heyman has one of the greatest wrestling minds of all-time. I say this because whenever Paul loses one of his top wrestlers to WCW or the WWF, he knows how to fill that void with another star. I also say this because he brings out the best in his wrestlers, no matter if they are in front of a crowd of 500 people or 2,000 people. I think if Heyman had the money WCW or the WWF has, he would be on top in the rating wars.

HAROLD PAWLIK
Erie, PA

LECHEROUS LIZ?

What is Elizabeth trying to do by cuddling up and getting all cozy with Sting? We all know that she's really no good. She's nothing like the young, innocent girl she was when she first came into the sport. That's for sure.

If Sting were smart, he'd dump Liz quicker than a cup of two-day-old coffee. She and The Total Package have something cooked

up, and whether he knows it or not, Sting is hanging above the big pot just waiting to be dropped into the boiling water below.

MEG FINNEY
Science Hill, KY

ENTER SANDMAN (AGAIN)

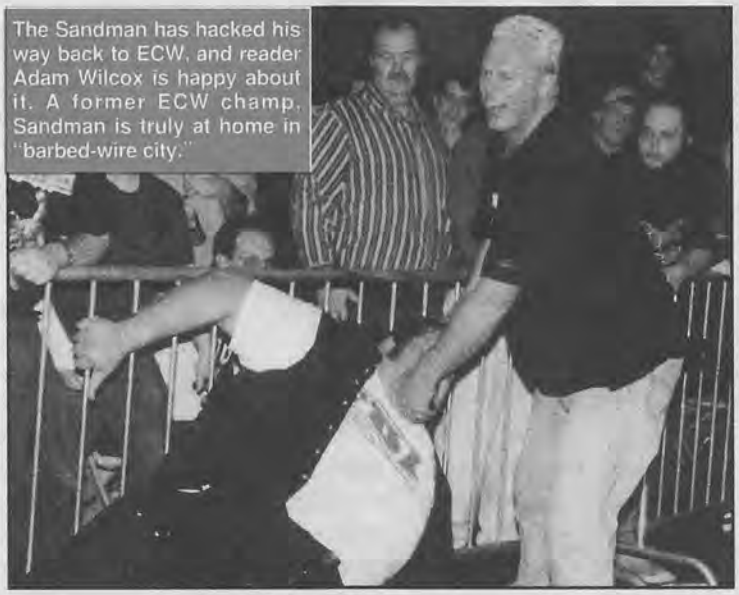
It's good to see The Sandman back in ECW. We saw the federation's talent roster become very depleted in 1999 due to the absences of Shane Douglas, The Dudley Boyz, and Taz. The former ECW champion's presence is sure to help balance those losses.

Besides, Sandman is tailor-made for ECW. While WCW does have a hardcore division, ECW has always been where Sandman has shone the brightest. He is a star there, and the fans love him, which was evident the night he returned and took out Lance Storm, Justin Credible, and Steve Corino.

The Sandman has given ECW a boost in a time of need. Now that he is back, we can look forward to more great battles against The Impact Players, Sabu, and whoever else decides to step up to the plate.

The Sandman has indeed come home.

ADAM WILCOX
Niagara Falls, Ontario



The Sandman has hacked his way back to ECW, and reader Adam Wilcox is happy about it. A former ECW champ, Sandman is truly at home in "barbed-wire city."

PERVERTED PORNOGRAPHIC VIEWING

There is no excuse for what the WWF let happen with Miss Kitty at Armageddon. It seems like every time the WWF checks itself, they have to roar back even more lewd and crude than before.

TINA KELSEY
Irondequoit, NY

TANK WON'T TANK

This is a warning to all WCW wrestlers. If you haven't watched Tank Abbott in his UFC bouts, do so. If you don't, this guy is going to hurt you and hurt you bad.

Tank is exactly like his name, a big brute that will not be slowed down by anything or anyone. He's a streetfighter, and he prides himself on his pugilistic abilities.

Tank, though dangerous, does possess one major flaw. He can't go the distance. In his UFC fights, if Tank didn't win the match in the first few minutes, he usually didn't win. Making the matches go longer should be of prime importance when wrestling Tank. It's one of the ways to beat him. In fact, it might be the *only* way to beat him.

DANNY LAKE
Vineland, NJ

LAUDING LYNN

I would like to congratulate all the readers of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED for voting Jerry Lynn the Most Improved Wrestler for 1999 ("The PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED Achievement '99 Awards," March 2000). There are very few men who exude professionalism in every sense of the world, but Jerry Lynn does. He constantly gives his all, and you will never see him complain after losing a match—even if it was interference that cost him the victory.

If there were more wrestlers like Jerry Lynn, wrestling as we know it today would be far more interesting and far easier to stomach.

CHRISTINA CUBERO
Anthony, NM

KANE'S CONUNDRUM

Kane is a monster—a big, red monster. Why doesn't he just kick the living hell out of X-Pac and end this miserable feud?

I'll tell you why. It's because deep-down inside, he still has feelings for the little troublemaker. X-Pac was the first person to ever show Kane real compassion, and I don't think that Kane will ever forget that. He wants to beat him up, and he wants to beat him up bad. He won't let himself do it, though.

DAVE MILL
New Baltimore, PA □

10 YEARS AGO IN PWI

The cover of PWI's May 1990 issue featured Hulk Hogan posing with the WWF World heavyweight title belt. Only months away from WrestleMania VI, Hogan was ready to fight any opponent, whether it was The Ultimate Warrior, Curt Hennig, Zeus, or someone unexpected.

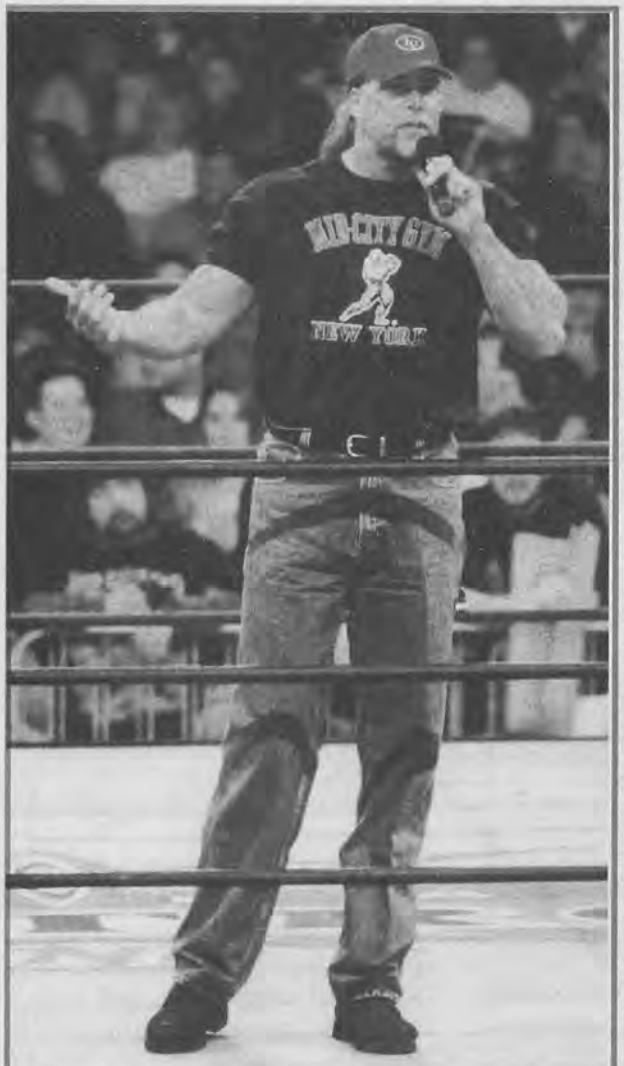
Elsewhere in the magazine: Wrestlers spoke about how they dealt with the daily agony of nagging injuries ... We wondered whether manager Teddy Long removed Sid Vicious from The Skyscrapers too soon ... Details on how Roddy Piper embarrassed Rick Rude in a steel cage match were presented ... Eric Embry lamented the actions of Chris Adams and the Von Erichs ... The Rock 'n' Roll Express discussed their return to the NWA in "Press Conference" ... The Great Muta was featured in the centerfold.

Magazine availability: Limited.

RINGSIDE

With Will Welsh

THIEVES. THIEVES AND liars. **Kevin Nash** got the wrestling world's attention by spewing off a very intense and profane tirade that attacked pro wrestling's puzzling infrastructure. Then he capitalized on that attention by getting the band back together in front of a nationwide audience that was waiting to see what he would say or do next.



When Kevin Nash addressed the crowd on the *Nitro* after Starrcade, his tirade about "the office" had everyone in the television audience either muting or turning up the volume. The speech was a great setup for the rebirth of the NWO.

The members of the reborn **New World Order**—Nash, **Scott Hall**, **Bret Hart**, **Jeff Jarrett**, and **Scott Steiner** (a late addition)—immediately changed the landscape of WCW when they robbed **Bill Goldberg** of his second WCW World title by attacking him during his *Monday Nitro* Starrcade rematch with Hart. When it was over, Goldberg and **Roddy Piper** lay unconscious in the ring with the infamous NWO symbol painted in silver across their limp bodies.

"Don't say we didn't warn you," an exultant Nash told me following the historic *Nitro.* "The moment that Scott [Hall] and I reentered WCW, we told you—we told everyone—that the band was getting back together. Now, if you didn't figure out that I was talking about the NWO, you're as stupid as you look, Welsh."

As stupid as I might look, which is apparently pretty stupid if you ask Nash, I do know one thing: Nobody in WCW was ready for the NWO's rebirth.

"I really can't believe that they pulled it off," said one WCW wrestler who requested anonymity for fear of retribution. "It almost makes me wonder whether or not it was Hall and Nash who contacted [Vince] Russo about coming in. Jarrett, too. And what they must have said to Bret to get him involved ... it's just crazy."

As of press time, the NWO's mission remained unclear, but if the plan is to again bring about the destruction of WCW, the group should have a much easier time of it this go-round. Hall and Nash remember all the mistakes they made in their first attempt, and they won't repeat them. They've already shown that by eliminating such would-be "B-team" members as **Don** and **Ron Harris** (formerly **Creative Control**), **Shane**, and **La Parka**. This time, NWO membership will consist only of the elite, and right now, Hall, Nash, Hart, Jarrett, and Steiner *are* the elite.

Let it be said that ECW World heavyweight champion **Mike Awesome** is not afraid of a challenge. In very much the same way that Awesome won his first ECW World title, **Masato Tanaka** won *his* first ECW World title by defeating Awesome in an impromptu title match that was brought about by of the urgings of **Cyrus** and a raucous Nashville crowd. What resulted was a stellar match that saw Tanaka walk away with the belt. Six days later, however, Tanaka's reign ended when Awesome struck back in a rematch and regained his title.

Although the quick title changes seem to denote an unstable championship atmosphere, many ECW insiders see the changes as positives.

"A couple of months ago, when we were losing guys like **Taz** and

Masato Tanaka defeated Mike Awesome for the ECW World title on December 17, but lost the belt six days later in a rematch. Joey Styles was glad to see Tanaka hold the title, even if it was only for a short time.

The Dudley Boyz, people were saying that we had a shallow talent roster," **Joey Styles** said. "Look at us now. We easily have eight guys who can compete for the World title—and win it—on any given night. All Tanaka's win and subsequent loss does is elevate this company that much higher by giving us another solid contender."

You know what? I have to agree with Styles. Do the WWF and WCW make their world champions defend their world titles on such a consistent basis and against such varied opposition? I don't think so. That aspect of ECW has always been one of the company's strong points—and it just keeps getting stronger.

Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley. Maybe if I write that again, I'll believe it. Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley. Nope—didn't work.

What prompted Stephanie McMahon to actually look upon **Triple-H** with lovesick eyes, I'll never know. I guess, though, that it's safe to say that Stephanie likes bad boys—very bad boys.

"We're just *soooooo* misunderstood," Triple-H told me with mocking jocularity after a recent *Smackdown.* "Why can't people just accept that we're two crazy kids madly in love? She's the love of my life, and I have people like **Jim Ross** calling her names that I can't even say in your magazine. I mean, her dad, *our dad,* won't even talk to us. I kinda feel like I'm starring in *Romeo And Juliet.* Like the Capulets and the Montagues, the McMahons and Helmsleys are at war, and I don't know if our marriage will be able to heal age-old family wounds. It's just really, really sad. I really want to get to know my new and oh-so-wealthy billionaire family."

Yeah, Triple-H, I agree, it *is* sad. In fact, I feel a tear rolling down my cheek right now. I have to take a break. I'll be back after I retreat to the break room and have myself a good cry ...

Torrie Wilson fans, rejoice! She recently signed a contract with WCW and looks to be in position to become a major part of the promotion. My reaction: *Yippee!* ... **"Big" Dick Dudley** is the new Xtreme Pro Wrestling heavyweight champion after defeating **"Real Deal" Damien Steele** on a recent card. After the match, Steele's valet, **Jasmin St. Claire**, dumped Steele and tried to align herself with the new champ, but Dudley would have none of it. After looking at the gorgeous **"Miss Xtreme" Kristi Myst**, Dudley's valet, I can see why. What a knockout! ... **Dragon Kid** recently debuted in EMLL. Insiders are saying that Kid has the potential to become one of the best high-flyers in recent memory ... Since returning from his home in Puerto Rico, Oklahoma Pro Wrestling's **Tarantula** has been spinning a poisonous web around OPW light heavyweight champion **Joey Casanova.** Unless Casanova, who has had to resort to cheating to keep the belt around his waist, can figure out a way to soundly defeat Tarantula, I can't see him holding the title much longer ... FMW President **Shoichi Arai** recently announced that FMW star **Kodo Fuyuki** was fired from the company. Fuyuki responded by saying that he will start up an ECW offshoot promotion in Japan in an effort to get even with his former employers.

As long as things remained on course, ECW's first video game, *Hardcore Revolution*, should be on store shelves as you read this. After viewing the game, which was produced by Acclaim, I have to say that it is an excellent first foray into the video game market for ECW. It includes all of your favorite ECW stars (and some of your old favorites, like **Taz**, **Louie Spicolli**, and **Beulah McGillicutty**) and all of their favorite moves (there are 400 moves in total), plus a wide selection of specialty matches, of which my favorite was the barbed-wire match—talk about brutal virtual reality.

Now, I have to warn the parents out there that the M-rated game

(Continued on page 88)

"Big" Dick Dudley is the new Xtreme Pro Wrestling champion after beating "Real Deal" Damien Steele. If that means we get to see more of the alluring Kristi Myst, Dudley's valet, we're hoping for a long title reign.

in focus

By Dave Lenker

HUMOR ME

*Everybody in wrestling is a comedian these days. Check that. Everyone in wrestling **thinks** he's a comedian. Many of those who think they are comedians aren't funny at all. In fact, some of the funniest people in wrestling really don't go out of their way to be funny. They're just naturally funny. And since wrestling in the U.S. isn't really that much about wrestling anymore, I'll offer my thoughts on what's funny in sports entertainment today and what's not funny. (By the way, I've read the following column over several times, and it's really, **really** funny.)*

•**Jerry Lawler** is always funny. Even when the one-liners he delivers are predictable, he's funny. His voice inflection, his tone, and his facial expressions (when he's on camera) are what make a lot of his stuff funny. I realized just how funny he can be when I tried to repeat some of his lines to friends who missed them on TV. When I deliver them, they're usually not funny. Lawler's doing something right. He's doing a lot right.

•**Oklahoma** is not funny. Okay, he was funny (but tasteless) the first time or two. But he added very little to his Jim Ross impersonation after the first few times. Good to see he's gone.

Lou E. Dangerously is just a funny guy. He doesn't have to do a lot of talking to be funny. All he has to do is look and act like Paul E. Dangerously—and he does it so well.

•**David Flair** is funny. David Flair used to be funny because he actually tried to wrestle. Now his facial expressions alone are enough to make me laugh.

•**Rikishi Phatu** is not funny. Well, he was funny the first time I saw him do his dancing routine with Too Cool. But I wonder how far a man whose gimmick is that he has a large backside can go in the WWF.

•**WCW executives** can be funny. When I look at WCW's talent roster (after extensive cuts were made) and see that there are still a lot of guys who have no business being on that roster, I laugh. I laugh even harder when I think about how Torrie Wilson was actually allowed to leave over a money dispute. All the money that company spends on talent and Torrie was allowed to shop her talents elsewhere before the two sides eventually agreed on a deal. Very funny, guys.

•**Buff Bagwell** is not funny. Never has been. I can't figure out if he's trying to get us to love him, hate him, or turn him off, and I'm about ready to give up trying.

•**Lou E. Dangerously** is funny. I never would have believed that Sign Guy Dudley could make himself look

like Paul Heyman with such little effort. This new Dangerous Alliance thing he has going with "Beautiful" Billy Wiles and "The Enforcer" C.W. Anderson has the potential to be more entertaining than the Blue World Order we saw in ECW a few years ago ... as long as Heyman is willing to tolerate the parody.

•**Al Snow** is not funny. This is a good thing in Al's case. During the last few years, he has tried to be the funniest guy in the WWF. And the whole Head act was funny ... for a while. Then it got old. *Real* old *real* fast. Now that Al's taking things a lot more seriously, he's a lot more entertaining, and he's showing that he's a very good wrestler.

•**Triple-H** is funny. He's actually a lot funnier now than he was during his first stint with DX. "How about a hug?" was what he said to Shane McMahon the night after he beat Shane's dad at Armageddon. *That* was funny. I'm talking laugh-out-loud funny.

•**Kevin Nash** is not funny. I think I do a better Vince McMahon impression. Okay, Kevin Nash *can* be funny. That Oz gimmick was *really* funny.

•**Shane** is downright hilarious. So were **Vincent**, **Vince**, and **Curly Bill**. This WCW lackey might be the most versatile star in all of wrestling. Need him to change his gimmick? Just tell him what you want and he'll do it—and do it funny.

•**The Rock** is not funny at all. If I'm watching the WWF on TV and I hear his entrance music start to play, I automatically reach for the remote. Who am I kidding? The Rock is damn funny. The Rock is the funniest man in wrestling.

•**Norman Smiley** is funny. Actually, Norman Smiley was funny long before he became "Screamin'" Norman Smiley, WCW hardcore legend. He was one of those rare guys who could just walk out on the entrance ramp and make me laugh. I think it was the look on his face, even though that look didn't really say much. Of course it's tough to get a good look at Smiley's face now since it's usually covered by a football helmet. But he's still funny.

•**The Artist Formerly Known As Prince Iaukea** is not funny. Maybe he's not trying to be funny. But if he's not trying to be funny, what's he trying to be? More interesting than Prince Iaukea, I'm guessing. It's not working yet.

•**Lex Luger** is funny. Can't believe I actually typed those four words in succession, but it's true.

•**Mike Awesome** is not funny. I know for a fact that Awesome isn't trying to be funny. He's trying to be a great wrestler. And he's succeeding in a big way. Imagine for a moment how good and interesting he could be if he gave us reason to laugh at his interviews ... or hate him ... or love him ... or something other than just respect him. We need to see more of this man's personality.

•**Dawn Marie** is funny. It's hard to tell when watching her do interviews if she really is clueless or if she's just trying to get us all believe that she is. Either way, she's funny (as well as hot).

•**Mae Young** is not funny. Okay, Mae Young is funny when she's hanging around with Mark Henry or when she's bickering with Fabulous Moolah. But Mae Young is *not* funny when the exhibitionist inside her comes out to play. When Ivory stripped her down to her undergarments in an evening gown match held this summer, I wasn't too happy, but I was able to forget about it, because a few seconds later, Moolah did the same to Ivory. Then, after Miss Kitty showed all of us her puppies at the end of the four-corners evening gown match held in a pool at Armageddon, Young thought she had to try to top that. So she voluntarily stripped down to her underwear and threatened to go further. Not funny, Mae, not funny *at all*. □

If you were disappointed in some of the impressions Kevin Nash did a few months ago and thought they indicated he had no comedic talent, you must have missed the stint he had as Oz in WCW in the early-1990s.

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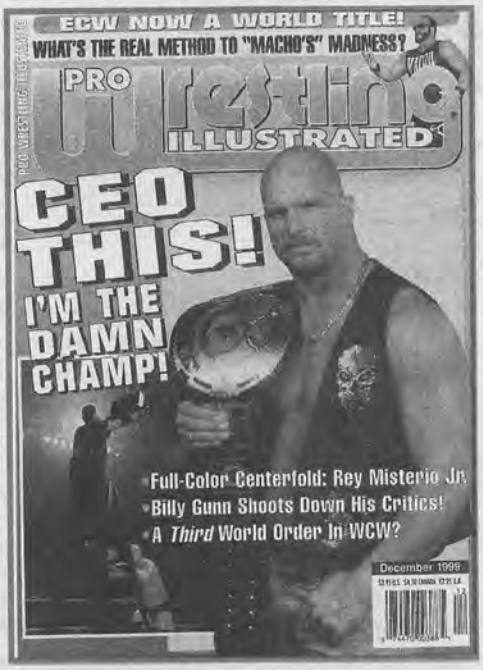
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off the top rope

by Brandi Mankiewicz

If you wish to contribute to Brandi's mailbag, send your letters to:

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(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Brandi Mankiewicz herself. They do not necessarily reflect the editorial views of this magazine.)

ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER "PWI Poll." What does it all really mean? It is just our little way of making you people understand that there is much more to wrestling than showing skin and buying the WCW cologne for men. It's about which maneuvers will kill you and who is using them. It's about which show is best and which one needs the most improvement. But the real question is this: Why wasn't I included in the balloting for sexiest woman in wrestling?

*Will our poll results really affect the sport? They should. It's a yearly reality check for those who have lost touch with this surrealistic realm we call life (**ahem**, Mr. Piper). It's our little way of showing that there is more to this sport than Monday nights.*

Well, here's reality for you. It's called a dip in my mailbag. It's a look into the sick so-called lives of my minions. I know it's scary, but luckily I am a brave warrior carrying the torch of knowledge and light. For this courageous action, I will always be known as your champion.

Dear Brandi,

I have a question for you, and I hope you can answer it. What ever happened to "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin? He is my favorite wrestler ever and always will be! So please answer this question.

MANDY MARGULLIS
stonecoldsgirl1_316@Yahoo.com

Mandy,

Once upon a time, there was a stunning wrestler with a great future ahead of him in WCW. He then had a run-in with the mighty Vader, got a boo-boo on his knee, and lost his job with WCW. Stunned, he tried to become a ring master and failed miserably. Austin then gave in to the demons of depravity that swirled within him. He then went on a multi-year tirade against the man who revived his dead career. During this tirade, he got dropped on his head by a "Black Heart." Numbed, he teased everyone around him like a schoolyard bully until no one would play with him anymore. Feeling lonely, he adopted two puppies and is now making a good home for them in Texas while awaiting a lobotomy.

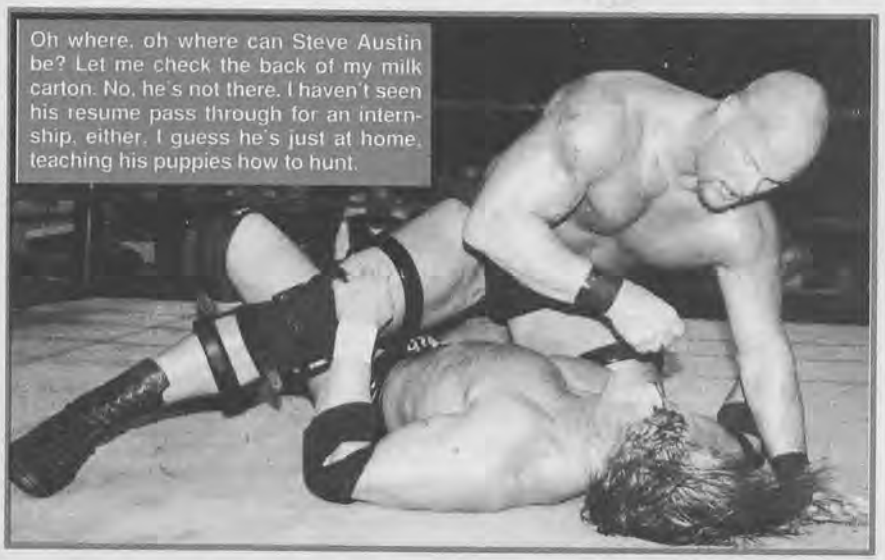
Dear Brandi,

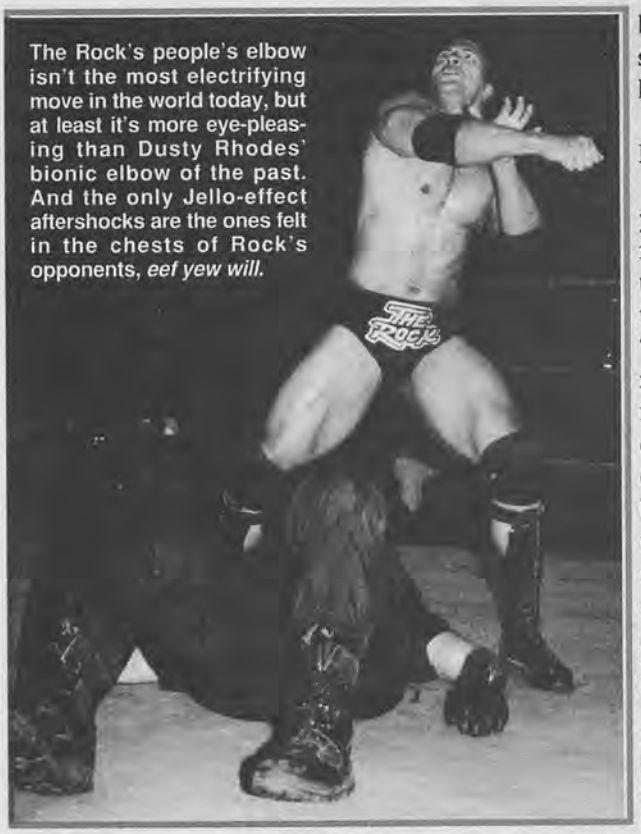
I find it hard to believe that the WWF is more popular than WCW. The WWF has always been a children's clown show that has more talk than war. The wrestlers, with the exception of a few, are untalented and uncreative. Take The Rock, for example. His finishing move, the people's elbow, is a waste. Just by adding a stupid leg twitch, we're all supposed to believe it's more powerful than a normal elbow.

STEVE BOSTOCK
Manchester, England

Steve,

Where have you been for the past few years? Oh, England. That explains it. Just to let you know, the WWF has revolutionized wrestling and has brought it to a whole new level. Nowadays, it's filled with daredevil moves and scintillating action, both in the ring and from the women. As for the people's elbow effectiveness, I think it's a lot more devastating than a bionic elbow from Dusty Rhodes. Everyone always fell prey to that, and that had its own special twitch: a jiggle from his belly welly.


Oh where, oh where can Steve Austin be? Let me check the back of my milk carton. No, he's not there. I haven't seen his resume pass through for an internship, either. I guess he's just at home, teaching his puppies how to hunt.



The Rock's people's elbow isn't the most electrifying move in the world today, but at least it's more eye-pleasing than Dusty Rhodes' bionic elbow of the past. And the only Jello-effect aftershocks are the ones felt in the chests of Rock's opponents, *eef yew will.*

Dear Brandi:

I've noticed that WCW doesn't hold many *Nitros* in football stadiums anymore. Does that have to do with the lack of fans at shows and low ratings? Speaking of ratings, are their numbers bad just because they're in second? I think *Nitro* has gotten a little better since that Russo clown has come around. Hopefully he can stop the big stars there from disappearing. Hogan, Hall, Goldberg, Flair, and Piper have all disappeared for different reasons.

ANTHONY WHITE
Igot2jobs@aol.com

Anthony,

With the way WCW's been looking lately, I'm not sure it'd be able to fill a football stadium even if the Super Bowl were taking place at the same time. WCW is lacking ratings, and, yes, that's a bad thing. Remember the first rule about competition: Anything after first place is useless. Vince Russo knows that. He and Ed Ferrera still believe that it was their work that pushed the WWF into its elite position. They were partly responsible, but Vince McMahon's deep pockets and talent roster had a lot to do with it, too. As for people disappearing, maybe it's because they can't stand what wrestling has become.

Dear Brandi:

I would like to tell you how grateful I am for you and the rest of the staff who work on the *"PWI* 500". The "500" is probably the magazine I most look forward to. I not only enjoy seeing where everyone is ranked, but also reading about them. I was just wondering if you could explain to me why guys like Mitsuharu Misawa and Keiji Muto get such high rankings, but have not beaten the top talent in the U.S. I'm sure that Triple-H, ranked number 26, could defeat either of those guys. Guys like that should not be ranked so high if they are unproven against the best the U.S. has to offer.

JOSEPH STIGER
kanedawg263@hotmail.com

Joseph,

I am grateful that you know the proper usage of correlative conjunctions, but after spending my precious time cleaning up your spelling errors, I think you should use the spell check function on your computer. The *"PWI* 500" is a ranking of the top wrestlers in the world. If you paid any attention in your geography classes, you would know that there is much more to this world than the United States. Now, I realize that you have never been outside a 10-mile radius of your home, but that doesn't mean we have to limit ourselves to your tiny universe. It doesn't take a person with a clean gene pool to understand that Misawa could demolish much of the American talent with one crushing tiger driver. The American style of wrestling is too focused on romance and sophomoric talk. Our wrestlers spend way too much time worrying about appearance and not enough learning the art of their craft.

Brandi,

Why is it so difficult for someone like myself who is trying to get into wrestling to find an establishment that can help me become a pro wrestler? Why is it so difficult to find training centers? Is it so secret that you need a note or an act of Congress to get into wrestling? If parents don't like their kids performing these wrestling moves in their backyards, then they should be able to go to these schools without using most of their life savings.

BURLEIGH WHITNEY JR.
Wasilla, AK

Burleigh,

I would love to tell you how to get into professional wrestling, but I swore on a sacred *Wrestling Almanac And Book Of Facts* that I would never tell a soul. It would be in direct violation of the oath I took several years ago. If you were let into wrestling, why, I'd have to give up my pension, backstage pass, laminated membership card to the Boogie Woogie Brigade, and they'd have to break my hands so I couldn't do the secret handshake ever again. So, no, I won't tell you. □

Mitsuharu Misawa may not have a sleek, buff body like Triple-H, but I'd put my money on him in a matchup between them. He's one of Japan's best, and he deserves our respect ... whether you like it or not.

KREW-CUTS

By Frank Krewda

Sometimes the most knowledgeable wrestling experts are stumped by questions for which there seem to be no answers. Historical questions like, "Who did **Ed 'Strangler' Lewis** beat in 1920 to win the World title?" are easy. They can be researched in a history book (or in the *PWI Almanac*). Usually, the real toughies are more abstract, something like the doosie that was posed to me recently: What was the greatest wrestling moment of the century?

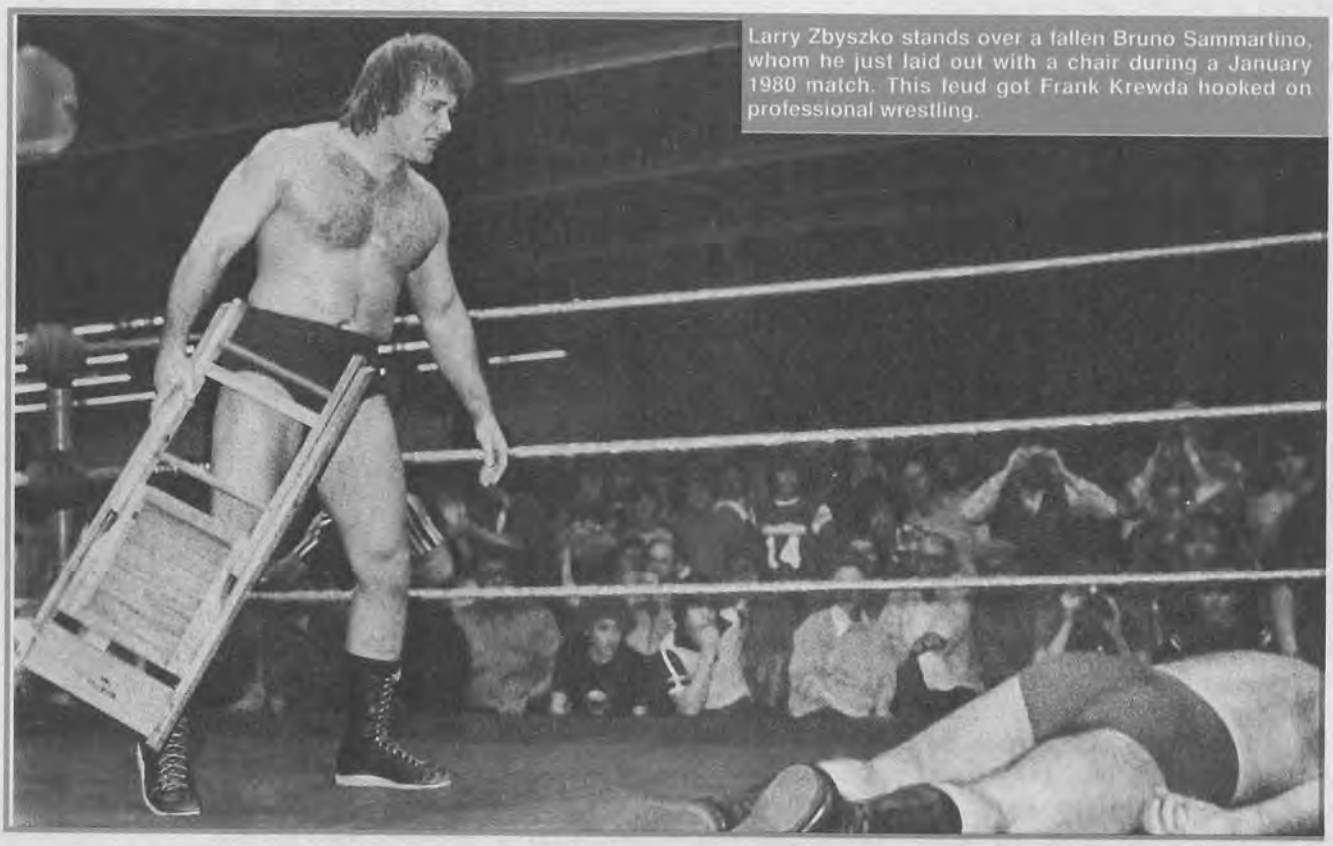
As the millennium closes, the temptation to neatly rank, rate, and classify every bit of lore from the previous 100 years has been indulged by just about every publication in print, including this one. But considering that I have only been alive for 29 of the previous 100 years, I hardly feel qualified to answer this question. So rather than put together a list of the century's greatest memories, I'll regale you with a few of my personal favorites. Some are great, some are not, but all are memorable to me for one reason or another.

The Freebirds blind Junkyard Dog. Although tame by today's standards, **Michael Hayes** throwing toxic powder into JYD's eyes was regarded as one of the most heinous acts ever perpetrated by one wrestler upon another, and it set the stage for one of the most courageous performances when a blind Dog got revenge on Hayes at the Louisiana Superdome in 1981.

Roddy Piper assaults Jimmy Snuka on "Piper's Pit." I had been a huge fan of the "Superfly" ever since he entered the WWF in 1981, and I enjoyed Piper's work as the confrontational color commentator on *Georgia Championship Wrestling* before he came to the WWF. Therefore, I had no rooting interest when these guys clashed on "Piper's Pit." The segment was insulting to Fijians everywhere, but 15 years later, people still talk about the time Piper smashed a coconut over Snuka's head without missing a beat on commentary. It was "The Rowdy Scot" at his best.

Cyndi Lauper makes the rock 'n' wrestling connection. Lauper's foray into wrestling precipitated a period of unprecedented success for the WWF and wrestling in general, but actually turned me off from the sport. Lauper's presence led to a 10-year period during which I wouldn't even look at a professional wrestling match. Lauper's silliness and lack of credibility as a wrestling force made a mockery of the sport.

Bill Goldberg defeats Hollywood Hogan for the WCW World title.



Larry Zbyszko stands over a fallen Bruno Sammartino, whom he just laid out with a chair during a January 1980 match. This feud got Frank Krewda hooked on professional wrestling.

The ratings may not bear this out, but for me, July 5, 1998, was the high point for WCW and *Monday Nitro*. That's because Bill Goldberg established himself as the next great superstar of our generation. Hogan not only passed the title to Goldberg on this night, but he passed the mantle of icon as well. Of course, Goldberg was buried by WCW mismanagement shortly thereafter, greatly undercutting the significance of his victory, but I still get goose bumps when I watch a tape of this match.

Larry Zbyszko turns against Bruno Sammartino. The bad blood started when Zbyszko, tired of wrestling in Bruno's shadow, expressed the desire to break free from his teacher. Intent on proving himself to his master, Larry challenged Bruno to a match at the Hamburg, Pennsylvania, Field House. They locked up. Bruno released. Sammartino clamped on his bearhug, then let go. The match clearly wasn't going Zbyszko's way, but not because he couldn't hang with his pedagogue. He felt Bruno was patronizing him. Frustration got the better of Zbyszko after Bruno countered his hammerlock by tossing his pupil from the ring. "The Living Legend" held the ropes for Zbyszko to re-enter, and when he did, he shocked Bruno with a kick, followed it up with a punch, then sent Bruno head-first into the turnbuckle. Then Zbyszko did the unthinkable: He took a chair from ringside and smashed it over Bruno's head. Once. Twice. Bruno was left facedown in a pool of his own blood. He would gain revenge a few months later in a cage match at Shea Stadium in 1980's Match of the Year.

This feud is where it all started for me as a wrestling fan and represented a lot of firsts. Zbyszko, that "doggone Judas," as Bruno would call him, became the first wrestler I truly hated (although my 10-year-old mind didn't care why Zbyszko did what he did). Bruno became the first wrestler I truly loved. And, come to think of it, that was probably the first chair shot I'd ever seen. I know for sure that Zbyszko's actions inspired my first sign (Zbyszko Sucks!), which was confiscated by my mother before I got the chance to show it off at an actual match.

It's Vader time! But not to the Japanese press, who snubbed Vader from 1999 MVP voting just because he is an American.

Vader gets screwed! Please allow me to preface this rant by saying that I do not consider myself an expert on Japanese wrestling. Some footage comes my way, but I am not in the habit of trading videotapes. Most of what I know comes through Japanese correspondent **Koichi Yoshizawa**, who does a marvelous job of keeping our staff up to speed on the latest Japanese developments.

I didn't need Koichi, however, to tell me that Vader was screwed by the Japanese press, who recently voted for **Keiji Muto** as 1999's Pro Wrestling MVP.

Not that Muto is such a bad choice. After all, he rode two of wrestling's gimpiest knees to several top-notch title defenses after winning the IWGP heavyweight title from **Scott Norton** on January 4 and defeated **Atsushi Onita** in an exploding barbed-wire death match.

Vader, however, saved All-Japan Pro Wrestling from a very grim fate. Not only had the struggling Japanese economy affected All-Japan at the box office, but the death of **Giant Baba** forced **Mitsuharu Misawa**, its top star, into a front-office position. Along came Vader, cast out of the WWF, to challenge and defeat Triple Crown champion **Toshiaki Kawada** in a Match of the Year-caliber bout. Then, after Kawada went down with an eye injury, Vader engaged Misawa in several classic struggles before winning the Triple Crown for a second time in '99.

Vader's matches this year have drawn some of the largest crowds in All-Japan history, and he has made a lot of noise with **Johnny Smith** in tag team action as well. Essentially, Vader made AJPW interesting again at a time when outside forces conspired against the company's success. Which wrestler, Japanese or otherwise, was more valuable to his company in 1999 than he?

Sadly, none of that counts, because Muto is Japanese, and Vader is American. So, with all due respect to Japanese tradition, that means there was no way in hell Vader would have ever even been considered for this award. The final voting, by the way, went like this: Muto (9 votes); Misawa (6 votes); **Naoya Ogawa** (4 votes); **Genichiro Tenryu** (2 votes); Onita (1 vote).

It's unforgivable that a press corps with their finger on the pulse of wrestling did not register a single vote for the man who may have preserved the landscape of their sport for several years. How does Japan stay on the cutting edge of wrestling with such antiquated thinking? □

WWF vs. WCW THE MONDAY NIGHT WAR

By Harry Burkett

Eric Bischoff and Ted Turner speak out ... Former WCW President Eric Bischoff commented on the WWF losing advertisers due to the lewd content of its programs in a recent interview with PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED. Bischoff said he saw these problems coming long ago.

"It could also have a potential backlash on the entire industry," he said. "If you go back to some of my earlier interviews, my biggest concern was that if advertisers begin to look at wrestling as an unfavorable environment, then television as we know it, as it relates to wrestling, could be severely impacted."

Bischoff added WCW, the WWF, and ECW would need to find a way to capture the public's interest without alienating advertisers.

During a December appearance on *Larry King Live*, Ted Turner commented on the current state of wrestling and WCW's difficulties in the ratings race. King queried Time Warner's vice chairman about wrestling's phenomenal rise—and its profitability—in recent years. To King's surprise, Turner stated he "wasn't making money on wrestling," although it had been successful in the past.

Turner added that he bought WCW when wrestling still consisted of "slamming each other around" and implied Vince McMahon had taken it to gutter level. A concerned grandparent who called in commented that he was disappointed with WCW's escalation of sex and violence. Turner said he appreciated the caller's concern and would investigate the matter. Turner said he hoped the caller wasn't confusing WCW with "Vince."

Judging from the recent tactics of the Powers-That-Be, that's anybody's guess.

Mixed reviews for the Powers-That-Be ... The jump of the WWF's creative team—including Vince Russo, Ed Ferrara, Bill Banks, and Terry Taylor—to WCW in October renewed a lot of interest in the ailing promotion, but that initial interest may have faded. Overall, *Nitro's* ratings are up by only about 0.3 points since Russo and Ferrara assumed power.

More disturbing is the fact that *Nitro's* ratings dipped slightly in December, indicating that Russo and Ferrara's philosophy of shorter matches, more dialogue, and quick cuts throughout the building isn't keeping the attention of viewers. The WWF is sticking to that philosophy, a concept Russo helped create, and apparently doing a much better job of it.

One possibility is that WCW appealed to a certain segment of fans who enjoyed 15- to 20-minute matches, less T & A, and fewer gimmicks. Since the WWF has the sex and violence market cornered, it's not likely to switch now, even with the pressure from advertisers, and WCW's loyal fans might actually be turned off by what they're seeing.

Are the Powers-That-Be going overboard for the sake of a much larger vision? Perhaps a disgruntled Turner Sports front office, as well as discarded wrestlers, will unite against the PTB, creating more interest. Ric Flair and Hulk Hogan returning to fight the Powers would be an intriguing development. After all, the Powers-That-Be is a fresher concept than resurrecting the New World Order for a third time. We'll have to see if *Nitro* eliminating its third hour makes a difference.

It's obvious that the Powers-That-Be were looking for a ratings boost when they helped to re-form the NWO. But as the ratings have proven, resuscitating *Nitro* is not a one-night process—no matter how shocking that one night is.

Can't they keep their clothes on? Miss Kitty shocked (and delighted) PPV viewers by flashing her breasts at Armageddon. Kitty had just captured the WWF women's title in an evening gown match that took place in a swimming pool. Kitty had vowed to expose herself if she didn't win the contest.

Not wanting "to disappoint her fans," Kitty

THE MONDAY NIGHT NUMBERS (Note: Each ratings point represents 750,000 households.)

DECEMBER 6

	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	5Q	6Q	7Q	8Q	9Q	10Q	11Q	12Q	OR	Composite
Raw	—	—	—	—	5.3	5.7	5.4	5.9	7.2	6.6	6.0	5.8	5.7	6.0
Nitro	3.1	3.8	4.1	4.1	2.9	2.8	3.0	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.7	3.0 (2.7*)

*Head-to-head composite

Tuesday Morning Quarterback: **The biggest washout of the evening occurred in 9Q, when Triple-H appeared on *Raw* and teased Stephanie McMahon with the possibility of an annulment. On *Nitro*, Disco Inferno and Lash LeRoux tormented a molasses-soaked Tony Marinara as Big Vito was stripped naked in a poker game. That's enough to make anybody switch the channel. *Nitro* narrowed the gap to two points with the Goldberg vs. Jarrett overrun.**

THE MONDAY NIGHT NUMBERS

DECEMBER 13

	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	5Q	6Q	7Q	8Q	9Q	10Q	11Q	12Q	OR	Composite
Raw	—	—	—	—	5.6	5.8	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.0	5.9	6.0	5.8	6.1
Nitro	2.9	3.4	3.9	4.0	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.7	3.3	2.8 (2.5*)

Tuesday Morning Quarterback: **Fans must think Triple-H's monologues and scheme sessions entertaining, especially if Vince McMahon is in camera range. Those segments shoot up to the 6.5 mark every time. *Raw's* numbers vary more dramatically than *Nitro's*, indicating that channel-switchers spend most of their time watching the WWF. *Nitro* stays in the 2.4 to 2.9 range, which isn't good. Stephanie's turn at Armageddon helped boost *Raw's* ratings on this night.**

THE MONDAY NIGHT NUMBERS

DECEMBER 20

	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	5Q	6Q	7Q	8Q	9Q	10Q	11Q	12Q	OR	Composite
Raw	—	—	—	—	4.7	5.7	6.4	5.5	6.1	6.4	6.2	5.6	6.1	5.8
Nitro	3.7	4.0	3.9	4.1	3.5	2.6	2.4	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.7	3.0	3.6	3.2 (2.9*)

Tuesday Morning Quarterback: Nitro's **numbers were up for the first 90 minutes of the program. In 5Q, the segment when *Nitro* loses viewers as *Raw* goes on the air, WCW kept the ratings close, to a 1.2 margin. Obviously, many viewers were sticking around to make sense of the Starrcade mess. Why did Piper screw Goldberg? Whose side was Bret really on? The WWF slowly regained its audience after Piper offered an explanation. WCW, though, rallied to a 3.6 during the Hart-Goldberg rematch.**

THE MONDAY NIGHT NUMBERS

DECEMBER 27

	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	5Q	6Q	7Q	8Q	9Q	10Q	11Q	12Q	OR	Composite
Raw	—	—	—	—	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.6	6.5	6.1	5.7	6.0	6.6	5.8
Nitro	3.0	3.6	3.8	4.3	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.0	—	2.9 (2.5*)

Tuesday Morning Quarterback: **Scott Steiner's bogus retirement segment (4Q) drew the highest rating for *Nitro* with a 4.3. The Powers-That-Be had anticipated a very slow upward climb. The fact that the ratings have actually taken a dip must be of great concern to them. Obviously, a few viewers were willing to give *Nitro* a second chance, but they didn't stay loyal. The McMahon-Helmsley era has one-upped the Powers-That-Be concept.**

removed her top anyway. Sgt. Slaughter, who was prepared like a good little Boy Scout, immediately covered Kitty with a towel. Then shock almost turned to horror as Mae Young tried to follow Kitty's lead by stripping down to her bra and panties. Thankfully, the Sarge was still on the job.

The WWF released a statement the next day, denying the incident was predetermined. "During the World Wrestling Federation's TV-14 rated pay-per-view event, titled Armageddon, on Sunday, December 12, 1999, an overzealous Miss Kitty flashed her breasts for less than one second in the four-corner evening gown pool match for the WWF women's title. WWF censors immediately placed a towel on her chest. The WWF apologizes for this unauthorized exposure."

We doubt the WWF will apologize for any increase in PPV buy rates Miss Kitty's stunt might encourage.

In a somewhat similar incident, Roddy Piper, Sting, Madusa, and Bobby Heenan appeared on ABC's *Politically Incorrect*. The WCW personalities bristled as host Bill Maher made snide remarks about wrestling. Some viewers thought Maher was just trying to have fun, and it appeared his panelists may have taken him too seriously.

To prove wrestling "wasn't a joke," Piper momentarily lost his temper and dropped his pants to show Maher the ugly scar he had from hip replacement surgery. Heenan did a good job of lightening the atmosphere, and the WCW panel seemed to forgive Maher before the end of the broadcast.

We're not so sure he was willing to forgive them. □

the steel cage

By Dave Rosenbaum

A TIME TO VENT. There are times when a writer has no choice but to do something he just doesn't want to do. Do you think basketball writers like it when they have to write nice things about Latrell Sprewell on the rare occasions when Sprewell does something good? Do you think baseball writers like it when they have to say nice things about George Steinbrenner? Do you think political writers who happen to be Republicans like it when they have to admit that Bill Clinton did something praiseworthy?

No! Of course not! The big problem with being a writer is that you have no control over events. If I had my way, Bret Hart would not have won the WCW World tag team title this past December, making him the first man in wrestling history to win the WWF and WCW world heavyweight, WWF Intercontinental, WCW U.S., and WWF and WCW world tag team titles. This is definitely not something I would have let happen.

Just thinking: Didn't Bret Hart once promise us retirement?

Unfortunately, Bret Hart did, indeed, win what we're now calling the big six, so when Dave Lenker called me the other day and said, "Write up a positive story about Bret Hart," I almost responded, "Up yours!" However, I am a writer, and Bret Hart really did achieve this accomplishment, and part of my job is being unbiased, so the story about Bret Hart in this issue was, indeed, written by me.

It was written by my alter ego. The other Dave Rosenbaum. The one who is capable of imagining that Bret Hart really is the best there is, the best there was, and the best there really will be.

I'll let you in on a little secret: When Bret Hart says that, I have no idea what he's talking about. I can in no way comprehend what it means to be the "best there was" and the "best there is" at the same time. This is gibberish, the kind of gibberish one might expect from a wrestler. After all, this is the same guy who refers to himself as "The Excellence Of Execution." Please, somebody, interpret that for me! Tell me what that means! I'm begging!

Does Dave Rosenbaum like Bret Hart? No. But being a consummate journalist, Rosenbaum doesn't let his personal feelings invade his reporting—at least not his *assigned* reporting. His columns are different matters entirely.

In a recent *Calgary Sun* column, Hart wrote, "I will do everything I can to restore the dignity that the titles have lost."

Hart, of course, failed to mention that he's one of the reasons the titles have lost their dignity. Of course, he also failed to mention that he was going to further destroy the dignity of the most important belt in WCW by winning it after his new NWO buddies hit Bill Goldberg over the head with a baseball bat.

I just realized something: I'm venting. This column so far has been nothing but me venting. I'm so upset about hav-

Together, Stephanie McMahon and Triple-H have spawned the tyrannical McMahon-Helmsley era. Surprisingly enough, Rosenbaum finds the wedded duo (especially Stephanie) entertaining and interesting.

ing had to write a positive story about Bret Hart that I'm taking it out on all of you poor readers. Chances are, most of you have stopped reading by now, but for those of you who haven't, I'm going to do everything I can to restore the dignity of this column by making reading on worth your while.

Here goes: Stephanie McMahon is the woman from hell.

First of all, she's a rich daddy's girl who's resentful toward Daddy. That's a bad combination. Any man who sees a rich daddy's girl who's resentful toward Daddy should steer as clear of her as possible.

Second of all, she uses men. She used Test, and not only did she use him, she put him in compromising positions that not only endangered his health, but had him questioning his manhood.

Third of all, she's power-hungry. She'll do anything for power. This is a woman who uses love as a means of gaining power. She is not a very nice person.

I don't know how she got that way, but I have a good idea: She was born into the McMahon family. The McMahons are power-hungry, and we know that because ever since there have been McMahons even remotely associated with wrestling, they've wanted to be number one. Not that there's anything wrong with that. It's just that when you're dealing with people, it's nice to know that they're power-hungry.

See, didn't I tell you I was going to restore the dignity of this column?

That being said, I have enjoyed watching the McMahon-Helmsley era. It has been quite humorous and entertaining. I think Stephanie McMahon is one of the more interesting wresting personalities to come along in a long time. That's because even though she's the woman from hell, hell is an interesting place, and women from hell have interesting stories to tell. I've known a few women from hell in my time, but that's a story for another time and another magazine.

I will close this column by saying that my idea of hell is dinner at the McMahon house. Can you imagine sitting down to dinner with Vince, Linda, and their two wonderful children, Shane and Stephanie? I think I'd barf. □

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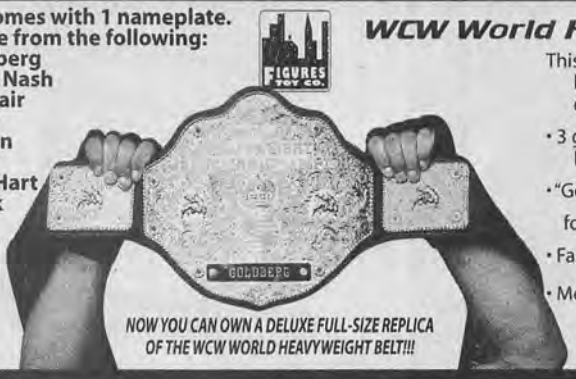

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win lose or draw

By Harry Burkett

THERE ARE MANY destructive influences in wrestling today, and I suppose we shouldn't be surprised when we hear about a new one. But I was shocked when Tom Brandi called me with the following scoop:

"Hey, man, I think *PWI* should do some investigative reporting," whispered Brandi. Right away I could tell Brandi was not his typical cool-headed self. "There's a serious situation developing in the IPWA ... and it's spreading."

For those not familiar with the IPWA, here's a primer. IPWA stands for the Independent Pro Wrestling Alliance, which promotes regular shows up and down the East Coast, primarily in Virginia and Maryland. Brandi is the heavyweight champion. He regained the title from Cueball Carmichael on August 21 in Chincoteague, Virginia. Carmichael is a member of the notorious Gambini family, also known as Little Italy.

Frankly, I didn't understand why Brandi was so worried. I pressed him to share his story.

"Harry, the Mafia is alive and well in the IPWA," Brandi said. "They've completely taken over the promotion. Vinnie Gambini is the head guy, but I think he's just the straw man. He's part of something much bigger. It's getting real scary."

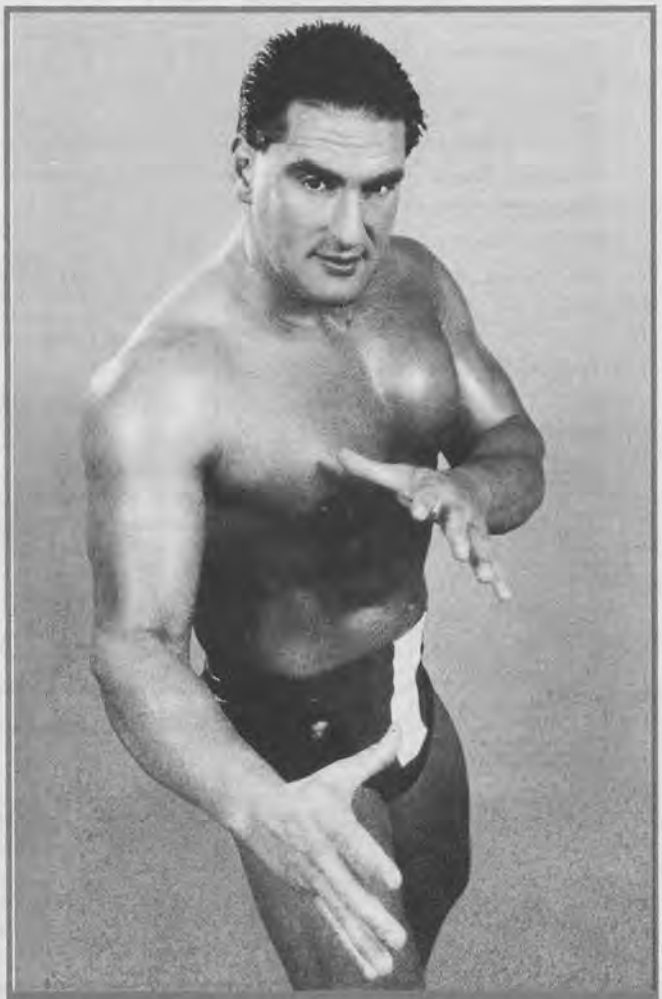
The Mafia in wrestling? I had visions of Disco Inferno and Lash LeRoux pouring molasses over Tony Marinara's head on *Nitro*. Nothing like an old-fashioned tar-and-feathering to goose the ratings. Disco owed money for a few bets. Those mobsters in WCW were kiddie fare. I couldn't imagine the IPWA mobsters being more dangerous than WCW's hoodlums.

Was the Gambini family threatening to break Brandi's kneecaps? I held back my laughter, knowing Brandi would be seriously peeved if he heard even a snicker.

Brandi went on to update me on recent happenings in the IPWA. The more he talked, the more I began sharing his concern.

Not surprisingly, Cueball Carmichael has been furious since Brandi beat him for the IPWA belt. Since Carmichael and partner Jimmy Cicero are preoccupied with the tag team title, manager Vinnie Gambini sent Corporal Punishment after Brandi. The IPWA champ had defeated Punishment in previous title matches, so it was no surprise when the Corporal came up empty-handed.

That's when Gambini became desperate. He offered a $10,000 bonus to any Little Italy member who could either win the belt or permanently injure Brandi. It looked like Brandi's days as champ were numbered as he prepared to fend off the trio of Carmichael, Cicero, and Punishment, plus any thug Gambini could pay off for the evening.



Tom Brandi has some problems, some *family* problems, and he's scared. Brandi, who has never really been a fan of aquatic life forms, is awfully afraid of fish right now, and he certainly doesn't want to sleep with any.

Brandi was granted a short reprieve when Joey Matthews and Christian York, released from their WCW contracts, returned to the IPWA. They targeted tag team champions Carmichael and Cicero who, ironically, were their mentors. Several title matches between the teachers and their students were signed for February and March 2000.

Meanwhile, Brandi must adapt to life as a marked man.

"You know, $10,000 is a lot of money on the indy circuit," Brandi boasted. "That's why I'm convinced there's a larger movement at work. Apparently, Gambini has big plans, like taking over Maryland Championship Wrestling, Steel City, and even the NWA. He figures the IPWA is already in the bag. Once he gets a lock on those promotions, Gambini—and whatever organization he's fronting—will dominate independent wrestling on the East Coast."

I searched for members of Little Italy after a recent IPWA show in Alexandria, Virginia. The first man I found was Carmichael. I wondered why Carmichael would be an accessory to something so clandestine. At one time, Carmichael had split with Little Italy, propelling him instantly to fan favorite status. He's the most successful IPWA wrestler in history. Carmichael's hometown is Thunder Bay, Ontario—not Sicily or Brooklyn. I asked Cueball if his motivation was something green, and I meant cash green, not pool table green.

"What other motivation could there be?" quizzed Carmichael. "I'm a businessman, and the best way to make some dough is with Vinnie Gambini. I'm not in pro wrestling to make friends. I'm in this biz to make profits."

Does that justify subjecting Brandi to countless four-on-one beatings?

Michael Corleone he's not, but Vinnie Gambini is using his influence and power to control the IPWA. We weren't sure if running this column was the smartest move for *PWI*, but here's hoping Gambini remains a friend of ours, so to speak.

"We're playing a game of chicken with Brandi," replied Carmichael. "He wants to act innocent, but it wasn't long ago that he was making transactions with Vinnie. Why don't you go ask Salvatore if he's really sincere?"

I got Carmichael's point. Brandi once assumed the name Salvatore Sincere in the WWF. He bragged about his Sicilian heritage. In fact, I do recall Brandi teaming with Romeo Valentino in MCW. Perhaps Brandi isn't as clean as pretends to be.

No, I decided that wasn't the case. It was obvious by his voice. He's fighting for survival. Just because Brandi is proud of his heritage doesn't mean he belongs to the Mafia.

After slipping the obligatory $20 bribe to one of Gambini's bodyguards, I was allowed into his inner sanctum. "What's this, Burkett, you stirrin' up trouble for my boys?" Gambini yelled in a blatant intimidation effort. "Does *PWI* want to stick their noses in the family business?"

I stammered, not sure how to answer. If I told the truth, I could be part of a very painful situation. If I lied, Gambini would see straight through it.

"No need to answer, my man," said the don. "Let me see ... there's a nice little river. It's called the Potomac. Maybe you'd like to go with my boys on a sightseeing trip on the Potomac ... and you can see the fishes up close if you like."

I told Gambini that I might accept the offer some other time. Sorry, Brandi, you're on your own. □

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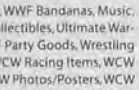

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the JAPAN REPORT

By Mike Spillane

HISTORY WAS MADE when **Genichiro Tenryu**, former sumo star and top draw of the WAR promotion, defeated **Keiji Muto** to win the IWGP heavyweight title on December 10 in Osaka. While the title win was noteworthy unto itself, what really made this a special event was that Tenryu, 49 at the time of his win, was thought to be too old to seriously contend for such a prestigious singles championship.

Tenryu became the first man to ever have been both an All-Japan Triple Crown champion and an IWGP heavyweight titleholder. While a handful of wrestlers have competed for both companies during their careers (**Vader** and **The Dynamite Kid**, for example) only Tenryu has ever managed to capture the top title in each. By virtue of this victory, Tenryu has reignited his career and won over legions of new fans.

Graceful in defeat, Muto wished Tenryu the best of luck in his reign as champion. Muto knows he'll need it, as the highly competitive heavyweight ranks in New Japan leave little room for rest or error. Numerous stars, ranging from New Japan mainstay **Masa Chono** to NWA heavyweight champ **Naoya Ogawa**, are waiting for cracks at the title regardless of who is wearing the belt. Fan favorite Tenryu has started on the long, difficult road to re-establishing himself as one of Japan's dominant stars.

Fans are buzzing over the recent heavyweight title switch in New Japan, but are baffled by the tribulations of IWGP junior heavyweight champ **Jushin "Thunder" Liger**. After completing a three-week stint in Mexico, Liger arrived in the United States for a stay with WCW. Without notifying New Japan officials, WCW booked Liger into a title match against **Juventud Guerrera** on *Nitro*. Then, with the aid of a glass bottle, Guerrera managed to knock Liger out and capture the prized IWGP junior heavyweight championship. Or did he?

At press time, New Japan officials were refusing to recognize the title switch. The match was not sanctioned by New Japan Pro Wrestling, and therefore, promoters argue, the title could not have been on the line. Despite what WCW announcers are claiming, says New Japan officials, the IWGP junior title never changed hands and has not been defended since Liger left Japan. Needless to say, when New Japan found out that its "business partner" WCW was continuing to promote Guerrera as champion, the company decided to put a little pressure on its American counterpart.

The result was quick in coming. In order to appease New Japan, WCW quickly booked a return match just seven days later. With Guerrera out due to an elbow injury he suffered against Liger, WCW thrust **Psicosis** into the match, instructing him to defend the title in Juvi's place. Liger handily won the match. Again, WCW claimed it was a valid title match. So, for the record, American books will show Liger to be an 11-time champion, but in Japan, NJPW books will show him as a 10-time titleholder. Liger's first sanctioned title defense since his departure from Japan was to have been at the Tokyo Dome against **Koji Kanemoto** in January.

Toshiaki Kawada, a three-time former All-Japan Triple Crown champion, is making a quick recovery from the eye surgery he underwent in mid-1999. Kawada has never faced current Triple Crown champion Vader in a singles match, and fans are clamoring to see the two lock up. Doctors predict a full recovery for Kawada, who could be back in action by the time you read this.

Who says Genichiro Tenryu is too old to dominate in New Japan? The former sumo star won his first IWGP heavyweight title just two months prior to his 50th birthday.

Though he was plagued by a string of injuries throughout the late-1990s (ranging from a broken arm to repeated lower back injuries), Kawada has proven himself against chief rival **Mitsuharu Misawa** on two occasions, but has failed to demonstrate any real staying power. Fans of this 18-year veteran hope that the new millennium mark a change of luck for this dynamic superstar.

Soo da, sayonara! □

the MEXICO REPORT

By John Molinaro

MORE THAN 10,000 fans piled into Arena Mexico to watch this year's Legend of the Silver Mask tournament. The second annual 16-man tournament is held to honor the memory and contributions to Lucha Libre of Mexican legend **El Santo**, and this year, it was again hotly contested throughout. In the end, the tournament boiled down to two of Mexico's finest: **El Hijo del Santo**, the son of El Santo, and **Ultimo Guerrero**. After the two traded moves back and forth, Santo managed to get Guerrero in a camel clutch. Guerrero couldn't escape the hold and ended up submitting to escape the excruciating pain. The tournament win gave Santo a shot at **Scorpio Jr.**, the winner of last year's Legend of the Silver Mask tournament, a week later. Santo also won that match by submission.

Rayo de Jalisco Jr. dropped the CMLL heavyweight title to arch-rival **Universo Dos Mil** on EMLL's annual year-end spectacular on December 10. After being out of action several months with a neck injury, Jalisco returned to full-time action only to find himself embroiled in a feud with **Los Hermanos Dinamitas** (**The Dynamite Brothers**—Universo Dos Mil, **Mascara Ano Dos Mil**, and **Cien Caras**). The feud eventually led to the title match at Mexico City's Arena Mexico.

The match was well-received by the small, spirited crowd. There were numerous near-falls throughout, but the true turning point in the match came when **Apolo Dantes** (who had had his head shaved two weeks earlier after losing a triple threat hair match to **Pierroth Jr.** and **Brazo de Plata**) hit Jalisco with a foreign object, knocking the champ unconscious and allowing Universo Dos Mil to record the pinfall and get the title.

The Auditorio de Tijuana is known in Mexico as "The Graveyard Of Masks" for all the historic mask matches that have taken place there. The building claimed two more treasured masks during the Christmas season when promoter **Benjamin Mora** brought two more big matches to Tijuana.

On December 23, **Super Astro** teamed with **Villano III** against **Lizmark** and **Fishman.** As per a pre-match stipulation, the members of the losing team had to face off in a mask vs. mask singles match later that night. After losing the tag match, Villano III pinned Astro, and the veteran Astro was forced to unmask.

Two nights later, another mask vs. mask match took place, as **Super Parka** defeated Tijuana legend **Halloween**, but a ringside fan almost ruined the entire evening by trying to provoke Halloween when Halloween attempted to grab a chair from ringside.

Halloween and his valet, **Lady Victoria**, had a heated exchange with the fan, but fortunately, the situation de-escalated rather quickly.

After Parka pinned Halloween in the third fall to win the match, the Tijuana crowd erupted by throwing mini-pumpkins at Halloween. You have to love their enthusiasm.

Over in AAA, the heated feud between **Los Vipers** and **Los Vatos Locos** continues to run wild. Los Vatos Locos recently grabbed the upper hand in the feud when they defeated Los Vipers and won the Mexican National tag team title from the team in Ciudad Madero. The two sides have been wrangling off and on for the past year, and the title change has only added dry wood to an already roaring fire.

The benefit show for **Aaron Alvarado Nieves**, who recently died of pancreatitis and who was the brother of **Brazo de Oro** and **Brazo de Plata**, was a very well-wrestled and touching show. The card featured many of Mexico's biggest names. Stars like El Hijo del Santo, **Felino**, **Fuerza Guerrera**, **Blue Panther**, and **Emilio Charles Jr.** all took time out of their busy schedules to help raise money for the devastated family. Commendations should go to all those who helped to put together such a special card. □

Photo by Jimmy Suzuki

El Hijo del Santo, the son of El Santo, gave tribute to his legendary father's legacy by winning this year's Legend of the Silver Mask tournament.

arena reports

The results in "Arena Reports" are culled from a month's worth of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly* newsletters. Readers of *PWI Weekly* received these results just days after the cards took place. If you would like to subscribe to *PWI Weekly*, see the ad elsewhere in this issue. If you would like to join professional wrestling's largest network of correspondents, write to: "Arena Report" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034.

UNITED STATES

ARKANSAS

NORTH LITTLE ROCK—Capitol City Wrestling at the North Heights Community Center: **The Superstar** beat **Jeremy James** by disqualification ... **Bryan Taylor** defeated **The Specialist** by reverse decision disqualification ... **Tim Storm** & **Max Riproc** beat **100 Percent Sexy** ... **The Reaper** pinned **Drew Jordan** ... **Billy Dye** defeated heavyweight champion **The Madd Chef** by disqualification ... **Casino Kidd** beat **Jeremy James** in a bullrope match ... **Rude Dawg** beat **The Madd Chef** & **The Creature** in a handicap match.
(12-03-99)

—Matt Duffield

CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO—WWF at the Cow Palace: **The Godfather** beat **Prince Albert** ... **Al Snow** & **Jacquelyn** defeated **Val Venis** & **Ivory** ... **D-Lo Brown** beat **Steve Blackman** ... **The Acolytes** beat **Bob** & **Crash Holly** ... European champion **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Test** ... **Edge, Christian,** & **Jeff** & **Matt Hardy** beat **Too Cool** & **The Dudley Boyz** ... **Kane** pinned **Midian** ... Intercontinental champion **Chyna** wrestled to a no-contest with **Chris Jericho** ... World champion **The Big Show** beat **Triple-H** ... **The Rock** beat **Big Bossman**.
(11-27-99)

—Fred Ryan

RESEDA—Xtreme Pro Wrestling at the XPW Arena: **Carlito Montana** defeated **Dynamite D** ... **Cybil** beat **Dollaz** ... **Kid Kaos** won a three-way match against **Michael Modest** and **Phenomenal Phil** ... **Jake Lawless** defeated **Johnny Webb** ... **Nicole Bass** beat **The Blunatic** & **Felony** in a handicap match ... **Supreme** pinned **Donovan Morgan** ... Heavyweight champion **Damien Steele** pinned **Kronus** ... **The West Side NGZ** defeated **The Pit Bulls** in a steel cage match.
(11-26-99)

—Todd Andrews

COLORADO

DENVER—Central Wrestling Organization's "Slam-O-Rama '99" at the Santa Fe Aztlan Theater: **Dreamer** pinned **Sweet Daddy Vishus** ... **Justin Cage** beat **Rex Tower** by disqualification ... **Shockwave** defeated **Chapel** ... **Stephen Cash** beat **Ryan Andrews** ... **Derek Corpse** defeated **Steel** and **Jenocide** in a three-way match ... Heavyweight champion **Reverend Black** beat **Psycho Sarge**.
(11-20-99)

—Chris Flund

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON—World Wrestling Union at the Big Kahuna Night Club: **Ruff Rider** won a battle royal ... **The Trio** beat **The Triad** ... **Self Employed** defeated **Nate Hatred** & **Sebastian Rose** ... **The Masters of Disaster** beat **Bodacious Brad** & **T.J. Steel** ... **O'Dogg** beat **Greg Spitz** by disqualification ... **Rockin' Rebel** won a three-way dance against **Damon Awesome** and **Patty O'Brien** ... **The Phat Pack** defeated **The Latin Dragons, MOD,** & **Jinx**.
(12-11-99)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

DOVER—ECW at Delaware State College: **Jerry Lynn** beat **Simon Diamond** ... **Mikey Whipwreck** beat **C.W. Anderson** ... **Amish Roadkill** & **Danny Doring** beat **Nova** & **Jazz** and **The Dupp Brothers** in a three-way dance ... World tag team champions **Tommy Dreamer** & **Raven** beat **Steve Corino** & **Jack Victory** ... World champion **Mike Awesome** beat **Spanish Angel** ... **New Jack** & **Axl Rotten** beat **Tony DeVito** & **Newz** ... **Super Calo, Ikuto Hidaka,** and **Tom Marquez** wrestled to a no-contest in a three-way dance when **Sabu** interfered ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Little Guido** ... **Justin Credible** & **Lance Storm** beat **Chris Candido** & **Rhino**.
(12-09-99)

—Frank Vitucci

PINE CREEK—East Coast Wrestling Association at Dickinson High School: **Jimi V** & **Jeff Peterson** beat **Nick Mondo** & **Eddie Valentine** ... **Ace Darling** pinned **Glen Osbourne** ... **The Backseat Boyz** won a four-team elimination match against tag team champs **Mark Shrader** & **Thunder, Patch** & **Inferno Kid,** and **Mr. Ooh La La** & **Mozart Fonataine** to win the title ... **Johnny Maxx** beat **Ground Zero** ... **Boogie Woogie Brown** pinned **Rik Ratchet** ... Mid-Atlantic champ **Ty Street** beat **Vincent Goodnight** in a ladder match ... **J.R. Ryder** pinned **Cheetah Master** in a no-disqualification, no-countout match ... A masked man (later revealed to be **J.R. Ryder**) won a Royal Rumble-style battle royal ... Heavyweight champ **J.J. The Ring Crew Guy** pinned **J.R. Ryder**.
(11-19-99)

—Jeff Amdur

FLORIDA

SUNRISE—WWF Armageddon pay-per-view at the National Car Rental Center: **Bradshaw** & **Faarooq** won an eight-team battle royal to earn a shot at the World tag team title at the Royal Rumble ... **Kurt Angle** beat **Steve Blackman** ... **Miss Kitty** beat women's champion **Ivory, B.B.,** and **Jacquelyn** in a four-way evening gown match held in a pool to win the title ... **Bob** & **Crash Holly** beat **Viscera** & **Rikishi Phatu** ... **Val Venis** beat **D-Lo Brown** and European champion **Davey Boy Smith** in a three-way match to win the title ... **Kane** beat **X-Pac** in a steel cage match ... **Chris Jericho** beat Intercontinental champ **Chyna** to win the belt ... **Mankind** & **The Rock** beat World tag team champions **Billy Gunn** & **Jesse James** by disqualification when **Al Snow** interfered ... World champion **The Big Show** pinned **Big Bossman** ... **Triple-H** beat **Vince McMahon** in a no-holds-barred match.
(12-12-99)

—Will Welsh

JACKSONVILLE—Thunder Wrestling Federation at the Thunder Dome: **Ashe Corvan** won a three-way match against **Lt. Michaels** and **Tiger** ... **Logan Styles** beat **The Phantom** ... **Twister** defeated **Ashe Corvan** ... **Johnnie Lee** pinned **Alexander Figgs** ... **Sean Starr** pinned **The Assassin** ... **The Florida Hurricane** & **Ghetto Superstar** defeated **Python** & **The Big Studd Hammer**.
(12-03-99)

—Ed Westerly

GEORGIA

ATLANTA—ECW at the Tabernacle: **Danny Doring** & **Amish Roadkill** won a three-way dance over **C.W. Anderson** & **Bill Wiles** and **Nova** & **Kid Cash** ... **Jerry Lynn** beat **Little Guido** ... **Super Crazy** beat **Super Calo** ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Uganda** ... **Tom Marquez** wrestled **Ikuto Hidaka** to a no-contest ... World champion **Mike Awesome** beat **2 Cold Scorpio** ... TV champion **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Tracey Smothers** ... **Justin Credible** beat **The Sandman** ... **Axl Rotten, Mahoney,** & **New Jack** beat **The Baldies**.
(12-02-99)

—Dominick Valenti

ILLINOIS

PEORIA—ECW at the Civic Center: **Jerry Lynn** beat **Little Guido** ... **Super Crazy** & **Tom Marquez** defeated **Jesus Cristobol** & **Yoshihiro Tajiri** ... **Nova** & **David Cash** beat **The Dupp Brothers** ... **Simon Diamond** defeated **Chris Candido** ... World tag team champions **Raven** & **Tommy Dreamer** beat **Danny Doring** & **Amish Roadkill** ... **Rhino** defeated **Sandman** ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Lance Storm** ... **Sabu** defeated

Justin Credible ... **New Jack, Axl Rotten,** & **Mahoney** beat **Tony DeVito, Spanish Angel,** & **P.N. News.**
(11-20-99)

—Sammy Quinden

INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS—Mid States Wrestling Alliance at the Youth Center: **Spike Stevens** beat **Jerry Blackwell** ... **Billy Bart** pinned **Snake** ... **Able** defeated **Paul Dimond** ... Tag team champions **Rob Ramer** & **Blade** beat **Drill Sgt. Nelson** & **Sgt. Greg Lake** ... Heavyweight champion **T.J. Powers** defeated **Austin James.**
(12-10-99)

—William Newton

JEFFERSONVILLE—NWA/Ohio Valley Wrestling at Davis Arena: **Rico Constantino** & **Damaja** beat **Jason Lee** & **Rip Rogers** by disqualification ... **Low Rider** beat **Vito Andretti** ... **Sean Casey** defeated **Randy Royal** ... **Mr. Black** defeated **B.J. Payne** ... **Flash Flanagan** beat **Scotty Sabre** ... **Rob Conway** defeated **Bull Buchanan** by disqualification ... **Rico Constantino** defeated **Mr. Black.**
(12-09-99)

—Dominick Valenti

GREENSBURG—Wild Championship Wrestling Outlaws at the Greensburg Park Center: **Shiloh Hunter** beat **Don Basher** ... Heavyweight champion **Indiana Kidd Jr.** pinned **Lamar Erkle** ... **The Country Boys** beat **Shawn Cook** & **Billy Bart** ... Midwest champion **Johnny Eagle** pinned **Itch Coma Wieder** ... Heavyweight champion **Indiana Kidd Jr.** pinned **Guy Lombardo** ... **Rob** & **Gary Ramer** wrestled tag team champions **Don Basher** & **Johnnie Walker** to a no-contest.
(12-03-99)

—Randy Klemme & Harold Newt

IOWA

CEDAR RAPIDS—WCW at the Five Seasons Center: **Curt Hennig** pinned **Disco Inferno** ... Cruiserweight champ **Evan Karagias** beat **The Maestro** ... **The Barbarian** beat **Prince Iaukea** ... **Jushin Liger** defeated **Psicosis** ... **Jeff Jarrett** beat **Dustin Rhodes** ... World tag team champs **Creative Control** beat **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** & **Hacksaw Duggan** ... **Chris Benoit** beat **Ric Flair** ... World champion **Bret Hart** defeated **Sting.**
(12-04-99)

—Dominick Valenti

KANSAS

SALINA—WCW at the Bicentennial Center: **Curt Hennig** pinned **Disco Inferno** ... Cruiserweight champ **Evan Karagias** beat **The Maestro** ... **The Barbarian** beat **Prince Iaukea** ... **Jushin Liger** defeated **Psicosis** ... **Jeff Jarrett** beat **Dustin Rhodes** ... World tag team champs **Creative Control** beat **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** & **Hacksaw Duggan** ... **Chris Benoit** beat **Ric Flair** ... World champion **Bret Hart** defeated **Sting.**
(12-03-99)

—Dominick Valenti

KENTUCKY

SOMERSET—Hardcore Championship Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **Tracey Smothers** won a $15,000 pole battle royal ... **Ric Gunner** beat **Spanish Fly** ... **Shawn Christopher** beat **Ric Gunner** in a Christmas tree death match ... **Tracey Smothers** beat **Stan Sierra** to win the heavyweight title.
(12-10-99)

—Darryl Fugate

LOUISVILLE—NWA/Ohio Valley Wrestling at St. Therese's Gym: **Low Rider** wrestled to a draw with **American Eagle** ... **Rico Constantino** & **Damaja** beat **Guido** & **Vito Andretti** ... **Bull Buchanan** & **Mr. Black** beat **B.J. Payne** & **Scotty Sabre** ... **Rob Conway** beat **Nick Dinsmore** & **Kenny Bolin** ... **Rico Constantino** & **Damaja** beat **Bull Buchanan** & **Mr. Black.**
(12-07-99)

—Eric Elliott

MAINE

FARMINGTON—Eastern Wrestling Alliance at Mount Blue High School: **Alexander Worthington III** defeated **Adam Hastey** ... **Little Louie** defeated **King Queasy** ... Hardcore champ **Damon D'Archangelo** beat **Jason Rage** ... **Kildevil** beat **Larry Huntley** ... **Johnny Idol** & **Mike Steel** beat **Crusher Goodspeed** & **Aaron Morrison** ... **Mark Jaguar Nugera** defeated light heavyweight champ **Steve Ramsey** for the title ... Heavyweight champ **Dave Delicious** pinned **Apocalypse.**
(12-04-99)

—Josh Shea

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE—Maryland Championship Wrestling at Teamsters Hall: **Adam Flash** won a triangle match over cruiserweight champion **Mikey Whipwreck** and **Quinn Nash** to win the title ... **Earl the Pearl** & **Rich Myers** defeated **Christian York** & **Joey Matthews** ... **Mike Quackenbush** pinned **Dino Divine** ... **Cueball Carmichael** defeated **Julio Fantastico** ... **2-Dope** & **Sydeswype** beat **Gregory Martin** & **Qeenan Creed** ... In a six-man elimination match in which the losing team had to disband forever, **Bruiser, Corporal Punishment,** & **Danny Rose** defeated **Tom Brandi, Jimmy Cicero,** & **Romeo Valentino** (with **Royce Profit**). During the match, **The Unknown Soldier** interfered on behalf of Profit's team, but was unmasked to be **Julio Fantastico.**
(12-05-99)

—Timothy A. Walker & Jeff Amdur

HAGERSTOWN—HOPWF at the House of Pain Training Center: ***One-night turkey day tournament:*** **Slickyboy** pinned **The Doc** ... **John Rambo** wrestled **Gutterboy** to a double-disqualification ... **Malcolm Y** wrestled **Prof. Egon Ecton** to a double-countout ... **Nomad** beat **Aidiean** by reverse decision ... **Paul Beswick** pinned **OGB** ... **Slickyboy** won a triple threat match against **Nomad** and **Paul Beswick** to win the tournament.
(11-25-99)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

MISSOURI

CAPE GIRARDEAU—Midwest Renegade Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **Makaze** defeated **Jimmy Austin** ... **Big Bad Ben** & **Mike Sharona** defeated **Adrian Lynch** & **Eric Freedom** ... **Marty Jannetty** defeated **Rockin' Randy** ... **Ty Dalton** & **Deno Blade** defeated **Nikki Strychnine** & **Primo Donna III** ... **2 Tuff Tony** defeated **Madman Pondo** and **Mitch Page** in a three-way hardcore match.
(11-27-99)

—Tina Butler

NEW JERSEY

TOMS RIVER—NWA-New Jersey at the Toms River East High School: **Kevin Knight** (with **Kara Slice**) defeated **"Ramblin'" Rich Myers** ... **The Backseat Boyz** beat **Earl the Pearl** & **Judas Young** ... **Big Slam** pinned **Doink the Clown** ... **The Blue Meanie** pinned **Julio Fantastico** ... **The**

(Continued on page 32)

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(Continued from page 31)

Great Zorenzo won a battle royal ... **Slayer** beat **Biggie Biggs** in a hardcore match ... **Ryan Shamrock** (a.k.a. **Symphony**) beat **Bobcat** by submission. (**Donnie B** was the special guest referee) ... **Gillberg** pinned **Rik Ratchet** (with **Felipe the Pool Boy**).
(12-11-99)

—Timothy A. Walker & Dorothy Sultana

TRENTON—ECW at the Shrine Temple: **Danny Doring** & **Amish Roadkill** defeated **Bill Wiles** & **C.W. Anderson** ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Mikey Whipwreck** ... **Nova, David Cash,** & **Jazz** defeated **The Dupp Brothers** ... **Super Crazy** beat **Ikuto Hidaka** ... World champion **Mike Awesome** beat **Spanish Angel** ... **Axl Rotten, Mahoney,** & **New Jack** defeated **Tony DeVito, Newz,** & **Vic Grimes** ... **Chris Candido** beat **Tom Marquez** ... **Chris Candido** beat **Simon Diamond** ... **Jerry Lynn** won a three-way match over **Yoshihiro Tajiri** and **Little Guido** ... **Sabu** beat **Justin Credible** ... **Rhino** beat **The Sandman**.
(11-26-99)

—Will Welsh

NEW YORK

NEW YORK—WWF at Madison Square Garden: **Kurt Angle** beat **The Godfather** ... **Bob** & **Crash Holly** won a tag team battle royal ... **Rikishi Phatu** defeated **Shawn Stasiak** ... European champion **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Christian** ... **The Hardy Boyz** & **Chyna** defeated **Too Cool** & **Chris Jericho** ... World champion **Big Show** beat **Triple-H** ... **Al Snow** beat **Val Venis** ... **X-Pac** beat **Test** ... **Kane** beat **Viscera** ... **The Rock** & **Mankind** beat World tag team champions **Billy Gunn** & **Jesse James** by disqualification.
(12-04-99)

—John Simonetti

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE—Hardcore Wrestling Alliance at Tremont Music Hall: **Reverend Pain** & **Dark Hawk** defeated tag team champions **The Coroner** & **The Visionary** for the title ... **Sweet Dreamz** pinned **High Performance** ... **Zack** & **Andy Smith** beat **The Twin Dragons** and **The Amazing Redneck Americans** ... Southern states champion **Cletus Jenkins** defeated **Gorus** in a first-blood match ... Heavyweight champion **Brimstone Shocker** defeated **Wild Child** by disqualification ... **Oderous** won a battle royal.
(12-04-99)

—Amy Tucker

OHIO

BLANCHESTER—Heartland Wrestling Association at the Eagles Hall: **Logan Caine** beat **Tim Moxley** ... **Bobby Casanova** beat **Rory Fox** ... **Mad Anthony McMurphy** beat **The Xtremist** ... Cruiserweight champ **Todd Morton** beat **Astin Augustus Ambrose, Esquire** ... **G.Q. Masters** won a battle royal ... **Bull Pain** beat **Race Steele** by countout ... **Alexis Machine** & **Brian Fury** beat tag team champs **Chip Fairway** & **Cody Hawk** to win the title.
(12-04-99)

—Brady Laber

CLEVELAND—WCW at the CSU Convocation Center: **Norman Smiley** beat **Evan Karagias** ... **Lash LeRoux** defeated **Alan Funk** ... **Dustin Rhodes** beat **Prince Iaukea** ... **Vampiro** defeated **Berlyn** ... **Meng** & **The Barbarian** beat **Brian Knobs** & **Jerry Flynn** ... **Chris Benoit** beat **Dean Malenko** ... **Bret Hart** defeated **Ric Flair** ... **Bill Goldberg** beat **Lex Luger**.
(11-19-99)

—Daniel Pendleton

OKLAHOMA

TULSA—Oklahoma Professional Wrestling at the OPW Arena: **Vinnie Valentino** defeated **T.C. Gold** ... **Joey Casanova** beat **Brandon Groom** ... **Renegade** beat **The Great Bolo** ... **Rocco Valentino** defeated heavyweight champion **Big Daddy Moore** to win the title ... **The Bad Boys** beat tag team champs **The Casualties of War** to win the title.
(11-27-99)

—Pete Maguire

OKLAHOMA CITY—New Mid-South Wrestling Federation at the Mid-South Coliseum: **Slayer** pinned **The Oklahoma Kid** ... **Overdose, The Texas Outlaw,** & **Bull Bradley** beat **Tribal Force** & **Rick Valentine** by disqualification ... **Slash** beat **Tom Jones** ... **The Trojans** wrestled **Rick Garrett** & **Eli the Eliminator** to a no-contest ... **Miss Venom** & **Havoc** beat **Kelly Laroux** & **The Rock 'n' Roll Cowboy** in a mixed match ... **Jimmy Cruise** defeated **Bryan Cruz** in a handcuff match.
(11-21-99)

—Jim Compton

PENNSYLVANIA

WHITE OAK—Steel City Wrestling at the Athletic Association: **Bigg Playa** pinned **Trevor Lowe** ... Tag team champions **Shirley Doe** & **Lord Zoltan** defeated **Mark Mest** & **Max Havoc** ... **Samu** pinned **Christian York** ... **Joey Matthews** pinned **Gregory Martin** ... **Cueball Carmichael** pinned **Notorious Norm** in a loser-leaves-SCW match ... Heavyweight champion **T. Rantula** defeated **Bigg Playa** by disqualification ... **Cody Michaels** & **Tracey Smothers** defeated **Dennis Gregory** & **Powerhouse Hughes** (with **Drew Lazario**).
(12-12-99)

—Jeff Gorman

PARKSIDE—Professional Outlaws of Wrestling at the Parkside Fire House: **Frank Cody** defeated **Shatter** ... **Bodacious Brad** beat **Mini Dead Man Walking** ... **Nick Burke** pinned **Billy Reil** ... **Shawn Storm** defeated **Greg Spitz** ... **Dead Man Walking** beat **Savage** ... **Scorpion** wrestled **The Mercenary** to a no-contest ... **Rockin' Rebel** pinned **Nate Hatred** ... **Kool Kid Ice** wrestled **Cujo** to a double-countout in a dog-collar match.
(12-10-99)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

PHILADELPHIA—Extreme Championship Wrestling at the ECW Arena: **Nova** & **Kid Cash** defeated **Bo** & **Jack Dupp** ... **Jerry Lynn** pinned **Little Guido** ... **Super Crazy** pinned **Ikuto Hidaka** ... **Chris Candido** & **Rhino** defeated **Danny Doring** & **Roadkill** ... **Spike Dudley** pinned **Mikey Whipwreck** ... **Mahoney** & **Axl Rotten** beat **Bill Wiles** & **C.W. Anderson** ... TV champion **Rob Van Dam** pinned **Uganda** ... **The Sandman** pinned **Raven** ... World champion **Mike Awesome** pinned **Justin Credible**.
(11-27-99)

—Frank Vitucci

PHILADELPHIA—American Championship Wrestling Alliance at the Big "O" Center: **Pit Bull II** defeated **Rich Myers** by disqualification ... **Kronus** pinned **Wayne Woo** ... **Johnny Walker** beat **Dr. Ice** ... **Tommy Logan** defeated **Zeig** ... **Ron Starr** pinned **The Barr** ... **The Hellhound Cujo** defeated **Lucas** ... **The Heartbreaker** beat **Mr. Motion** and **C.J. Summers** in a three-way match ... **Gillberg** defeated **Earl the Pearl** ... **Zeig** won a battle royal.
(11-20-99)

—Melanie Kolbasowski

RHODE ISLAND

PAWTUCKET—Unified Championship Wrestling at the Barton Street Community Center: **Derek Destiny** defeated **Kid Crazy** and **Shane Simmons** in a three-way match to earn a shot at **Draven's** cruiserweight title ... **Eric Storm** pinned **Trooper Gilmore** ... **Mr. Biggs** beat **Steve Taylor** ... **Matt Storm** & **Vertebreaker** defeated **Southern Discomfort** ... **Bert Centeno** & **Danny Ramirez** beat **Luis Vega** & **Harley Homicide** ... Cruiserweight champion **Draven** beat **Derek Destiny** ... Heavyweight champion **Ebony Blade** and **Billy Black** wrestled to a time-limit draw.
(11-19-99)

—Anthony Rufo

DORCHESTER—New England Wrestling Alliance at Chez Vous Roller Rink: **The Ghost Rider** beat **Phantasm** ... **Patient 666** defeated **Sgt. Stryker** ... **Dallas Austin** & **Mark Thunder** beat **Butcher Brannigan** & **Mael** to win the tag team title ... **The Punisher** defeated **Scott Thomas** ... **Jason Kaos** beat **Johnny Quest** ... **Wolverine** pinned **Mark Thunder** to win the Intercontinental title ... **Danger Boy Alfredo** pinned **Dallas Austin** to win the TV title ... Heavyweight champion **Pierre the Mountie** beat **The Intern** ... **Sgt. Stryker** won a battle royal.
(11-17-99)

—Alfred Travieso & Chris Sanders

SOUTH CAROLINA

SPARTANBURG—American Pro Wrestling at the Shamrock Cafe: **Mike Hart** & **Randy Mulkey** beat **White Trash** & **Mickey Richards** ... **Ricky Nobel** & **Abel Atoms** beat **Chad Dillon** & **Greg Roberts** ... **Billy Badd** beat **Emilio Ulacia** ... **The Juvenile Delinquents** beat **Lee Storm** & **Buckshot Carter** ... **The Shooter** beat **Spike Isley** ... **J.D. Sullivan** defeated **Jeff Vicktory** ... **Jay Eagle** & **Big Mac Truck** wrestled **Armageddon I** & **Steve Crowe** to a double-countout ... **Terry Austin** wrestled **Pain** to a double-countout.
(12-03-99)

—Dan Parris

GREER—Southern Carolina Wrestling at the Sparks Arena: **Jeff Hart** defeated **Smiley Robinson** ... **Buddy Rose Jr.** beat **Blinky the Clown** ... Tag team champions **The Scorpion** & **The Destroyer** defeated **Amos Jones** & **Red Dog** ... **J.C. Dazz** beat **Cruizer Lewis** ... **The Heartbrakers** defeated **Jeff Hart** & **Buddy Rose Jr.** ... **Mickey Richards** defeated **Scar Stevens**

... **Scotty Wren** wrestled **The Spoiler** to a double-disqualification.
(11-30-99)

—Dan Parris

TENNESSEE

MEMPHIS—Power Pro Wrestling TV taping at WMC-TV studios: **B.J. Payne** defeated **Blade Boudreaux** ... **Robbie D** beat **Lance Jade** by disqualification ... **Steve Bradley** beat **Scotty Sabre** ... **Trailer Park Trash** defeated **Alan Steele** ... **Rico Constantino** defeated **Flash Flanagan** by disqualification.
(12-11-99)

—Frank Miller

JOHNSON CITY—Southern States Wrestling at Carver Rec Center: **Rob Valor** pinned **Bruiser Graham** ... **G-Dog** beat **The Memphis Bodyguard** ... **Frank Parker** defeated **Ricky Harrison** ... **P.J. Sharp** beat **Mike Cooper** and **Bruiser Graham** ... **Chuck Jones** defeated **Beau James** by disqualification ... **Rick Morton** & **Ricky Harrison** defeated **Death** & **Destruction** to capture the tag **team** belts.
(12-02-99)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

TEXAS

NORTH RICHLAND HILLS—NWA Southwest at the Texas Indoor Arena: **Kevin Northcutt** & **Jimmy James** defeated tag team champions **Team Extreme** for the title ... **Canyon** beat hardcore champion **Dr. X** to win the title ... **Kurt Reigns** defeated **Vasquez** ... **Alexis Divine** defeated **Melissa** ... **Mike Thunder** beat **Hark Hellraiser**.
(11-26-99)

—David Lankford

VIRGINIA

SALEM—ECW at the Salem Civic Center Complex: **Jerry Lynn** beat **Simon Diamond** ... **Kid Cash, Nova, & Jazz** beat **The Dupp Brothers** ... **Ikuto Hidaka** defeated **Super Calo** and **Tom Marquez** in a three-way dance ... World champion **Mike Awesome** beat **C.W. Anderson** ... World tag team champions **Tommy Dreamer** & **Raven** beat **Tony DeVito** & **Spanish Angel** ... **New Jack** beat **Vic Grimes** ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Little Guido** ... **Mikey Whipwreck** beat **Steve Corino** ... **Sabu** beat **Mikey Whipwreck** ... TV champion **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Rhino** ... **Justin Credible** & **Lance Storm** beat **Danny Doring** & **Amish Roadkill**.
(12-11-99)

—Dominick Valenti

COLLINSVILLE—AIWF at the Fieldale Collinsville High School: **Creeping Death** beat **Major Havoc** by countout ... **Lamont Steele** defeated TV champ **James Manson** to win the title ... **Gemini** beat **Butch Steel** ... **Terminator X** beat **Enigma** ... **Major Havoc** & **Robbie Evil** beat tag team champs **The War Machines** to win the title ... **Sweet Daddy** beat heavyweight champ **Steve Niles** to win the title.
(12-04-99)

—Dean Puckett

LYNCHBURG—North American Wrestling Alliance TV tapings at the NAWA Arena: Tag team champs **The Russian Mafia** defeated **The Texas Outlaws** ... **Lady Scorpion** beat **Nasty Debbie** ... U.S. champion **Dorty Reid** beat **Christopher Koresh** ... **Bob Ozark** & **Ace Shepard** defeated tag team champions **Gino Blanchard** & **Spiffy Stevens** by disqualification ... **Big Willy** beat **Dustin Daniels** by submission ... **Damian Thunder** beat **Sam Slater** ... Heavyweight champion **The Intimidator** beat **Shane Hooker** by reverse decision.
(12-04-99)

—C. Shane Cochran

ALTA VISTA—NAWA at the National Guard Armory: Tag team champions **The Russian Mafia** defeated **The Texas Outlaws** and **Mr. X I & II** in a triple threat match ... **Lady Scorpion** beat **Miss Laura** by submission ... **Bob Ozark** beat **Big E** ... **Gino Blanchard** & **Spiffy Stevens** defeated U.S. tag team champions **Ace Shepard** & **Tommy Brooks** for the title ... U.S. champion **Dorty Reid** pinned **Christopher Koresh** ... **Shane Hooker** pinned heavyweight champion **The Intimidator** in a non-title match.
(12-03-99)

—C. Shane Cochran

WEST VIRGINIA

MARTINSBURG—Atlantic Terror Championship Wrestling at the Berkeley County Multi-Purpose Center: **Christian York** & **Rich Myers** defeated **Dino Divine** & **Jimmy Cicero** ... **The Backseat Boyz** wrestled **Chad Austin** & **Steve Johnson** to a no-contest when **The Nation's Baddest Creations** interfered and attacked both teams ... **Terry Allen** beat **Joe Brock** (with **Barry Casino**) ... **Don Rott** beat **Nicky Fury** ... **Don Rott** won a Royal Rumble-rules battle royal to earn a title match against heavyweight champion **Dan Severn** on January 15 in Leesburg, Virginia ... **Gillberg** pinned **Earl the Pearl** (with **Platinum Nat**).
(12-10-99)

—Timothy A. Walker

SOUTH CHARLESTON—MDW at the Oakes Field Gym: **The Thrillbillies** beat **The Bad Boys** ... **Death** & **Destruction** wrestled **El Guanos** to a double-countout ... **The Bad Boys** beat **Joey Austin** & **Bob Brown** ... Lightweight champion **The Latin Tornado** beat **Kid Stuff** ... **The Thrillbillies** beat **The Regulators** ... **El Guanos** beat **The Masked Assassins**.
(12-04-99)

—Mark Mills

INTERNATIONAL

AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY—Titan Wrestling Promotion at Ingleburn R.S.L. Club: **Red Flair** won a 16-man battle royal ... **Dean Draven** & **Ami Action** beat **Troy Simmon** & **Raya** ... **Lethal Injection** pinned **Striker** ... **Greg Smith** pinned **Mad Dog Destruction** ... **Jumpin Josh** & **The Island Warrior** defeated **Red Flair** & **Fabio**.
(12-05-99)

—Rodney Messner

CANADA

MONTREAL, QUEBEC—Northern Championship Wrestling at the NDR Center: Quebec champ **Piranah** beat **Dream Killer** ... Inter-city champ **Jackal, Steven the Sweet Boy**, and **Franky the Mobster** wrestled to a triple-disqualification in a three-way dance ... **The Dream Warriors** wrestled **Deadly Venumm** to a double-countout ... **Golem** defeated **Eric Shelley** ... **TNT** beat **Rage** ... **Blaze** defeated **Bishop** ... TV champ **El Diablero** defeated **Todd Hiroshima**.
(12-04-99)

—Robert A. Letendre

CLOVERDALE, BRITISH COLUMBIA—International Championship Wrestling at the Fairgrounds: **Line Drive** defeated **Marvin the Lunatic** ... **Rick Richards** beat **Tank** ... **Kung Fu Ed** defeated **Fender Gibson** ... **Awesome Adam** beat **Punk Rock Prodigy** ... **Avalanche** defeated **Heckles Da Clown** ... **Shooter Da Clown** beat **The Chef** ... **Nikkie Sixx** defeated **Inferno** ... **Layne Fontaine** beat **Fabulous Fabio** ... **Chris Del Sol** defeated **Ken Riley** ... Pacific heavyweight champion **Randy Taylor** beat **Stoney Edwards** ... **Tim Flowers** defeated international champion **Mr. GQ** to win the title.
(11-27-99)

—Neil O'Brien

TORONTO, ONTARIO—WCW Mayhem pay-per-view at the Air Canada Centre: ***In the semi-finals of the WCW World heavyweight title tournament:*** **Chris Benoit** beat **Jeff Jarrett** ... **Bret Hart** beat **Sting** ... ***In non-tournament matches:*** **Evan Karagias** defeated cruiserweight champion **Disco Inferno** for the title ... **Norman Smiley** defeated **Brian Knobs** to win the hardcore title ... **Billy Kidman, Eddy Guerrero, & Torrie Wilson** beat **Perry Saturn, Dean Malenko, & Asya** ... **Buff Bagwell** defeated **Curt Hennig** in a retirement match ... U.S. & TV champion **Scott Hall** defeated **Booker T** ... **Vampiro** beat **Berlyn** in a chain match ... **Bill Goldberg** defeated **Sid Vicious** in an "I Quit" match when Vicious was rendered unconscious ... **Kimberly** and **David Flair** wrestled to a no-contest ... ***In the finals of the WCW World heavyweight title tournament:*** **Bret Hart** defeated **Chris Benoit**.
(11-21-99)

—Dutch Krewda

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY
MAY

CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES—NWA at the Olympic Auditorium: **Art Mahalick** and **Bob Wilson** fought to a draw ... **Rito Romero** defeated **Red Barry** ... **Sam Steamboat** beat **Larry Moquinn** ... **Whipper Watson** defeated **Hardy Kruskamp** ... **Mike** & **Ben Sharpe** and **The Fabulous Kangaroos** fought to a draw ... **Edouard Carpentier** defeated **Lou Thesz** in a best-of-three-falls match.
(05-27-60)

—PWI archives

NEW YORK

BUFFALO—Professional wrestling at the Memorial Auditorium: **Ed Meske** and **Terry McGinnes** wrestled to a 20-minute draw ... **Harold Peterson** defeated **Lee Hennig** ... **Jim Henry** beat **Mike Muzurki** ... **Lou Thesz** defeated **Tommy O'Toole** ... **Gorgeous George** pinned **Joe Page**.
(05-14-48)

—PWI archives

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA—WWF at the Philadelphia Arena: **Rene Goulet** beat **Tomas Marin** ... **Manny Soto** defeated **Jimmy Valiant** ... **Sonny Boy Hayes** & **Haiti Kid** beat **Sky Low Low** & **Little Brutus** ... **Chief Jay Strongbow** and **Baron Mikel Scicluna** fought to a draw ... World champion **Pedro Morales** beat **King Curtis** ... **Sonny King** defeated **The Black Demon** ... **Prof. Toru Tanaka** beat **Smasher Sloan**.
(05-06-72)

—PWI archives

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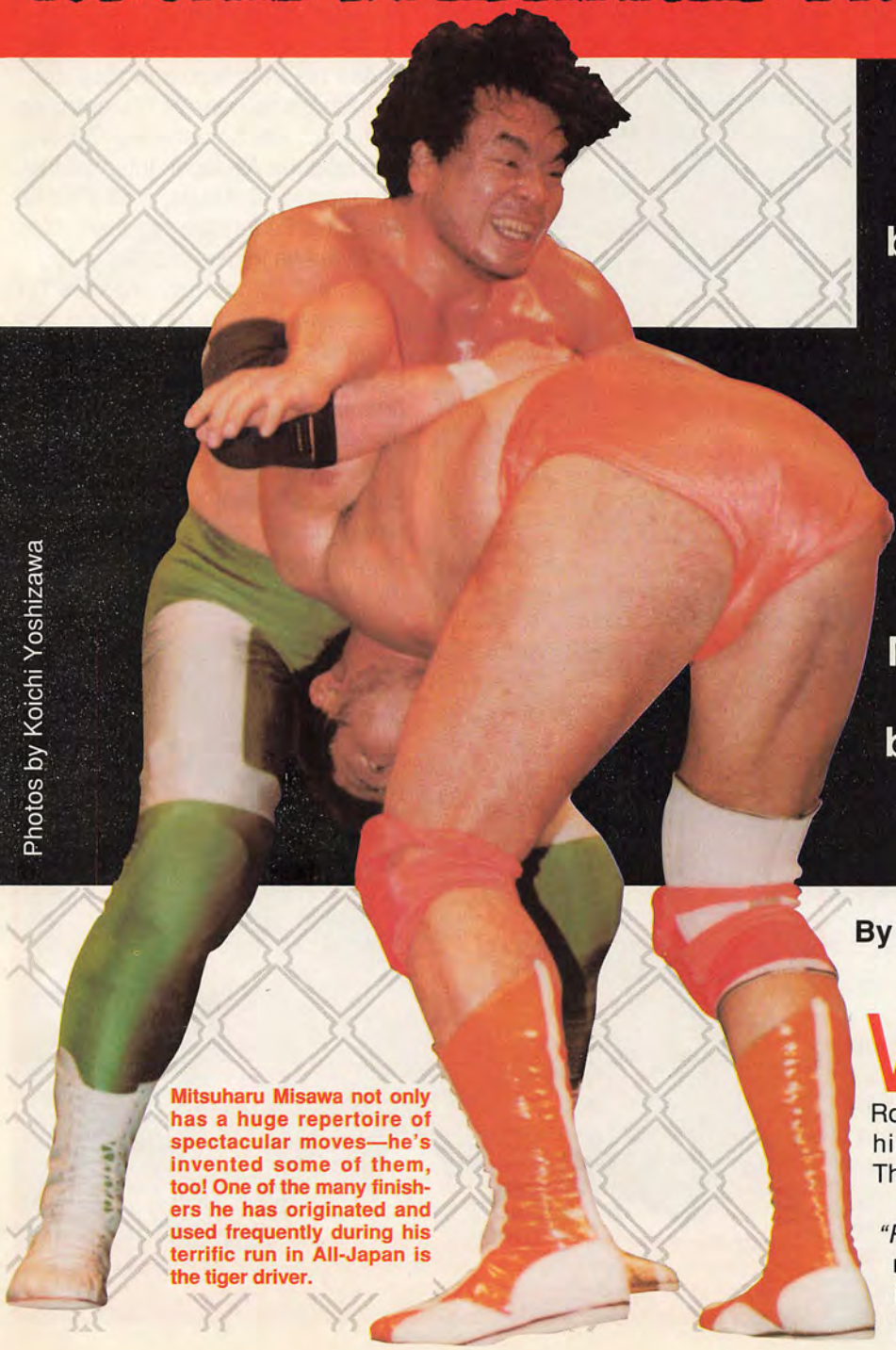
DEMAND MISAWA!

WHY IS THIS SUPERSTAR BEING IGNORED BY AMERICAN PROMOTERS?



Photos by Koichi Yoshizawa

Mitsuharu Misawa not only has a huge repertoire of spectacular moves—he's invented some of them, too! One of the many finishers he has originated and used frequently during his terrific run in All-Japan is the tiger driver.

You probably know the name, but unless you're willing to fly halfway around the world or you have access to Japanese wrestling tapes, you've never seen Mitsuharu Misawa in action. Don't hold your breath waiting for him, either

By Mike Spillane

WHO ARE THE top wrestlers in the world? Steve Austin? You know him. Rob Van Dam? You've heard of him, too. Mitsuharu Misawa? That names sounds familiar.

If you've picked up the annual *"PWI* 500," you've seen the name and perhaps wondered if indeed he warrants such high placement—3, 3, 2, 28, and 10

Misawa plants a kick in the stomach of Kenta Kobashi as Yoshinari Ogawa traps Kobashi in a sleeperhold. For years he has been wrestling exclusively in All-Japan because of the promotion's isolationist policies.

over the past five years. No wrestler, in fact, has a better average ranking over that period than Misawa. Yet, he has never appeared on this continent, and while he may be the most popular Japanese wrestler of the '90s, his name is not nearly as well-known as that of Jushin Liger or of Keiji Muto (The Great Muta). How could such an important player in the game remain so unknown to American wrestling fans?

Consider for a moment some background on Misawa:

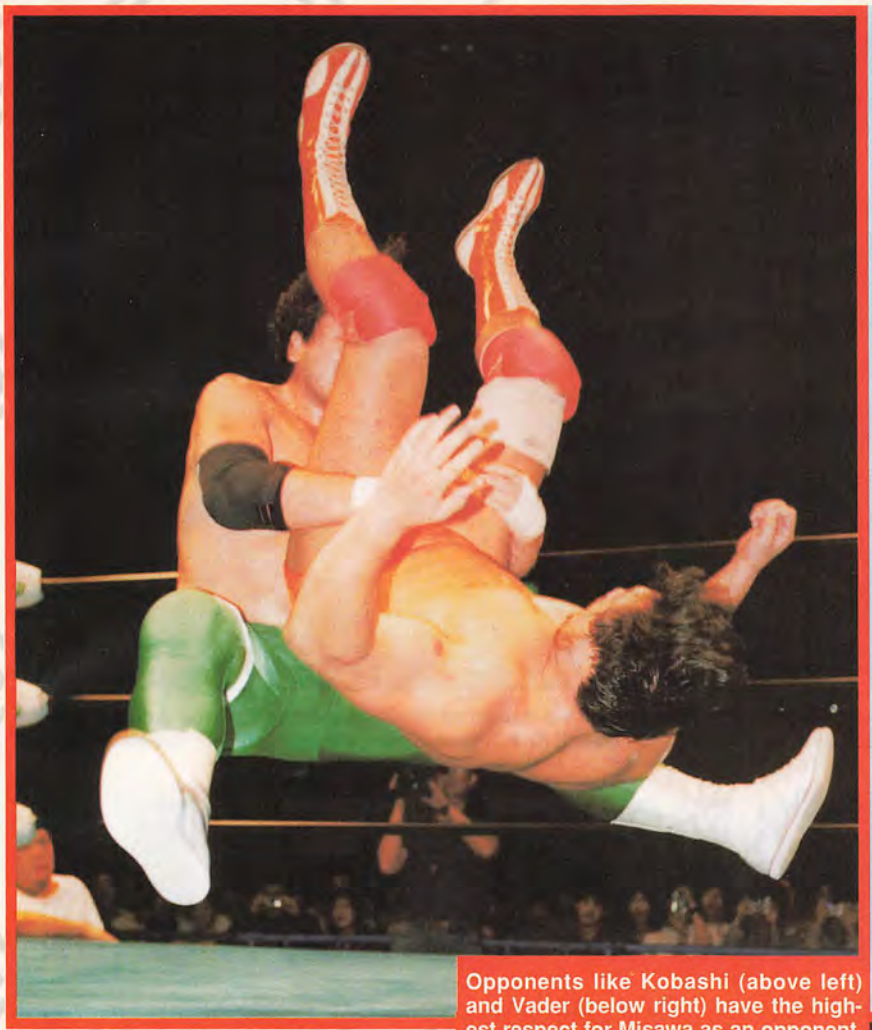
He is a five-time All-Japan Triple Crown champion, an unprecedented achievement in the history of *puroresu.* For more than 19 years, Misawa has been entertaining Japanese wrestling fans, first as Tiger Mask II, and now under his real name. His feud with Toshiaki Kawada continues to fascinate and intrigue All-Japan fans after a decade of warfare. Far and away the most inventive heavyweight wrestler of the era, Misawa has a varied arsenal of flying moves, strikes, high-impact maneuvers, *and* submission holds.

From an international standpoint, no wrestler has been as dominant in the last 10 years as Mitsuharu Misawa. Not Hulk Hogan. Not Shawn Michaels. Not Bret Hart. Not Ric Flair. The truth about Misawa is one that American promoters might not want you to hear.

"They don't want American fans to see his matches, and they don't want them to hear of his amazing exploits," said Yoshinari Ogawa, who held the All-Japan International, All-Japan All-Asian, and Pacific Wrestling Federation tag team titles with Misawa for two months in 1999. "The last thing they want is for American fans to get behind this superstar the way fans here have, because I don't believe American promoters want to bring Misawa to the United States."

According to Ogawa, Misawa has the potential to turn American wrestling on its ear. What would happen in, say, a Misawa vs. Rock match or a Misawa vs. Bill Goldberg

Because Misawa is such a phenomenal all-around wrestler with unbelievable stamina, there is some question as to whether American promoters would want their top stars to face him. What if he were to embarrass some of them?



showdown? Many people who have followed Misawa's career would tell you that he could beat two stars of that caliber on the same night. Here's the main reason why:

Misawa routinely wrestles in matches that last between 40 and 60 minutes. He has unbelievable stamina and has wrestled through injuries that would have ended most wrestlers' careers. Wrestlers like Triple-H are a mountain of intensity—for the first 10 to 15 minutes of a match. However, in the WWF and WCW today, you don't see many matches that extend beyond the 15- or 20-minute marks. At the 20-minute mark, Misawa's just starting to warm up. It's as simple as popping in a tape and watching for yourself. At 100 percent, no wrestler has the endurance of Misawa.

"The last thing American promoters want is to book an athlete like Misawa, who could conceivably destroy the drawing power of their top stars," said Stan Hansen, an All-Japan mainstay for years. "Misawa could outlast most American wrestlers. No American promoter wants to put his top stars in a position in which they could embarrassed."

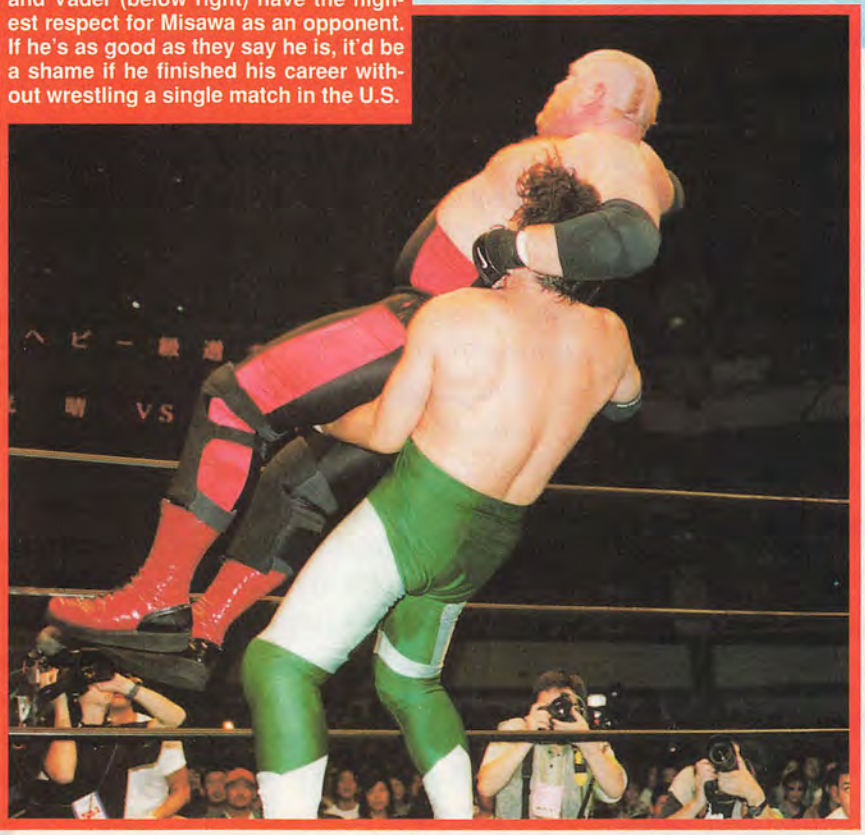
Of course, it is possible that Misawa wouldn't adapt well to the American style. PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED Publisher Stu Saks has observed Misawa's dominance, yet has been steadfast in his belief that he would have to beat American stars to prove he is worthy of receiving the top spot in the *"PWI* 500."

"The legends of athletes tend to grow when the truth is unavailable," said Saks. "That might not be the case here, but Misawa has the opportunity to prove otherwise. Until he comes here and beats our best, I'll be content to label him what he is: a dominant wrestler in Japan."

In past years, Misawa would not have come to the U.S. under any circumstances. While All-Japan was

(Continued on page 89)

Opponents like Kobashi (above left) and Vader (below right) have the highest respect for Misawa as an opponent. If he's as good as they say he is, it'd be a shame if he finished his career without wrestling a single match in the U.S.



press conference

Triple-H's feud with Steve Austin was one of the hottest of 1999. He isn't particularly worried about a possible comeback by "Stone-Cold" right now. If Austin does return, though, Triple-H has plans for him.

TRIPLE-H

WHETHER HE'S STAGING an invasion of a rival promotion with his fellow DeGenerates or scamming the owner of the WWF with an elaborate ruse involving said owner's daughter, Triple-H always goes all-out to get what he wants.

Since his arrival in the WWF five years ago, Hunter Hearst Helmsley has been overshadowed by the company he keeps. When Triple-H first captured the WWF Intercontinental title, most observers felt it was mostly due to the guidance of then-associate Curt Hennig. Then it was Shawn Michaels who stole the show as WWF champion while his good buddy Helmsley contended for the European strap. And at SummerSlam '98, it was Chyna's timely interference that delivered gold (again in the form of the I-C belt) to "The Game."

Those days of being overlooked are now a distant memory. Today, Triple-H is arguably the most powerful competitor in the WWF. He managed to turn Stephanie McMahon against her father at Armageddon and has since caused mayhem throughout the federation, even going so far as to book specialty matches on ***Raw*** *for his own amusement. He positioned himself as the top contender for the WWF World title and at press time, with DX in his corner, came away with The Big Show's belt. With the spotlight he so covets finally shining fully upon him, Triple-H agreed to an interview with Senior Writer Dan Murphy and Contributing Writers Matt Brock and Liz Hunter.*

"It's tough to get a good handle on what's really going on with Triple-H," reported Murphy. "Even after interviewing him, I couldn't really figure out what his relationship with Stephanie is. Are they really a happy couple, or are they just happy to be making Vince miserable? I'm just not sure."

TRIPLE-H: I see the whole gang came out for this little conversation. Murphy, I'm glad you brought some new faces for once. I was getting tired of talking to you every time one of your magazines wanted a comment. And Liz Hunter, no less. You know, Liz, if I weren't a happily married man, I might suggest you and I meet for a more personal one-on-one.

LIZ HUNTER: And if I weren't being paid to be here, I wouldn't be caught dead talking to you.

"By the time this rag hits newsstands ... DeGeneration X will have total control of all the gold in the WWF. Let 'The Game' begin."

TRIPLE-H: ***Ouch!*** **Murphy, you never told me she had claws.**

DAN MURPHY: You should catch her on deadline sometime.

MATT BROCK: Okay, it's obvious that I'm the one who's gonna have to get down to the brass tacks here. Hunter, you had my vote for Most Improved Wrestler of 1999, not that my opinion means anything to Saks, Lenker, and the rest of the editorial board of this magazine. Anyway, you've proven to me that you are a legitimate threat to the World title based on your own physical abilities. Why get some dame like Stephanie McMahon involved? You should know broads and wrestling just don't mix. You're gonna end up getting burned on this one. I've seen it happen a thousand times.

HUNTER: I for one can't wait to see that happen this time.

TRIPLE-H: Watch it.

BROCK: Would ya let the guy answer, Liz? *Sheesh!*

TRIPLE-H: The answer to your question should be obvious, Matt. When you look at Steph and me, you're looking at true love. We're like Romeo and Juliet. Bonnie and Clyde. Fred and Ethel Mertz. Just because she's the boss' daughter and it happens to be the best professional move of my career—hey, it's a happy coincidence! Sorry she couldn't make it here today, but she has more important people to deal with.

MURPHY: What I don't understand is why you went so far out of your way to target Test. I mean, Test is a talented up-and-comer, but you're a main-eventer. What was your rationale?

TRIPLE-H: Because I don't like Test. Because Test is the most gullible pawn in the WWF. Because Vince McMahon likes Test and wants to see Test become a superstar. Because Test is expendable. But most importantly, because the opportunity presented itself. The plan worked to perfection. The whole world was waiting for Andrew and Stephanie to tie the knot in a very heartwarming ceremony. Vinnie Mac had his chest all puffed out like the proud papa he claims to be. And just like that, the world came crashing down on the McMahon family. Test is crushed. And me? I'm the WWF World champion.

MURPHY: But don't you think you've made this war with a very powerful man—and obviously I'm talking about Vince McMahon—a little too personal?

TRIPLE-H: You want to talk about personal, Murphy? Don't you think Vince made his feud with "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin a little too personal when he threw Stephanie right into

(Continued on page 90)

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

BRET HART COMPLETES THE BIG SIX!

(Maybe He *Is* The Best There Ever Was)

No man in wrestling history has ever accomplished what Bret Hart accomplished this past December. The time has come to acknowledge his place in the sport's annals

By Dave Rosenbaum

Goldberg will try to take the WCW World title away from me at Starrcade. I keep thinking of when I recently jumped on his back to lock on a sleeper and he was so big and strong that right there in the middle of the ring I was thinking, ***This must be what it feels like to ride one of those big ol' Brahma bulls at the Stampede.*** *I tried phoning my dad to ask him how he'd go about tackling him, but, as usual, the line was busy. My son, Blade, 9, was there with me and he asked me why I wanted to talk with Grampy, and I told him because I want to come up with the best way to beat Goldberg.*

So he asked me, "Well, are you stronger than Goldberg?" I said, "No." He asked me, "Are you bigger than Goldberg?" I said, "No." He paused and thought long and hard about that, and then with a big ol' smirk, Blade said, "Well, Dad, then maybe you should cheat."

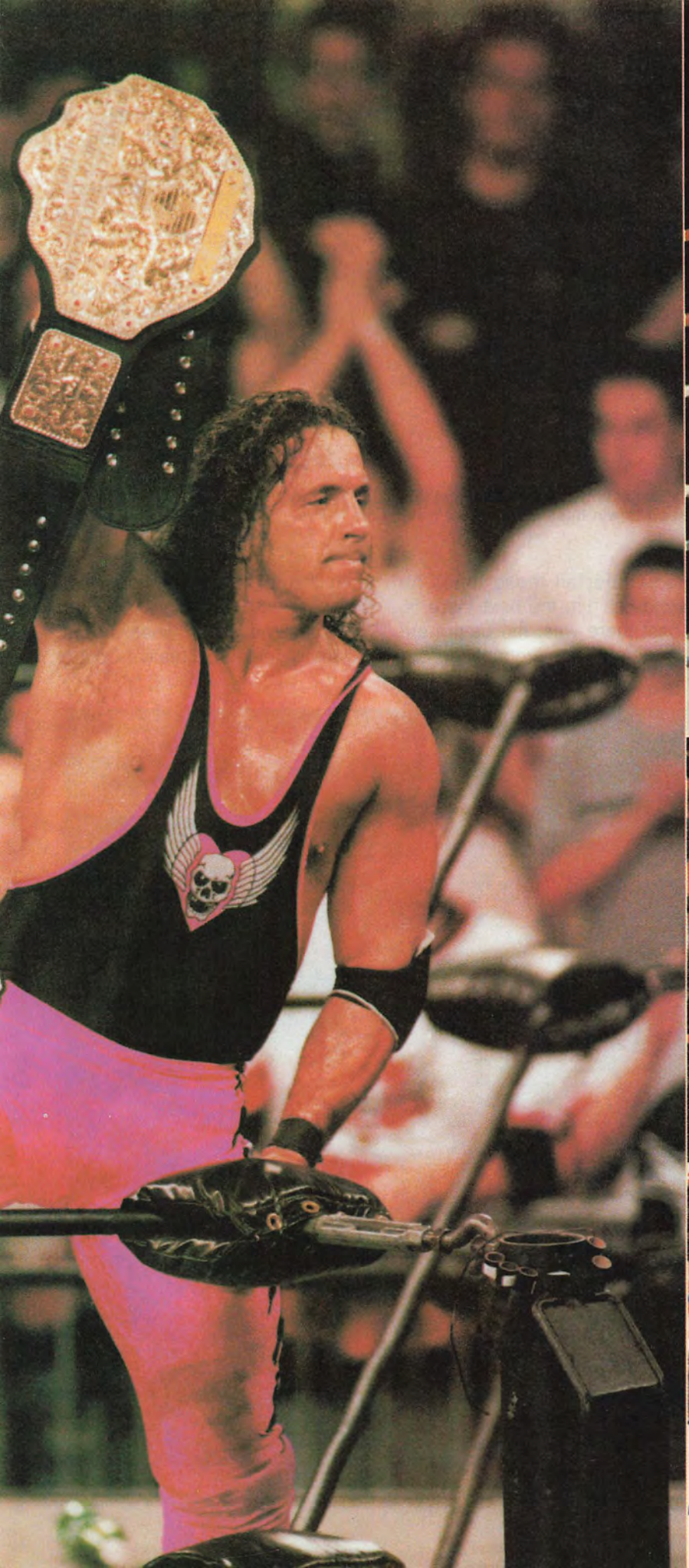
Hey, anyone who knows me knows I would never resort to something like that!

—From Bret Hart's *Calgary Sun* column, December 17, 1999

* * *

Photo by Claus Andersen

Although WCW World heavyweight champion Bret Hart has gone to the dark side once again, his recent actions shouldn't take away from his accomplishments. With all the major WWF and WCW titles to his credit, he might very well be the best ever.



As a member of The Hart Foundation, Hart captured two WWF World tag team titles with Jim Neidhart (above). Before amassing his collection of WWF World titles, Hart also captured two WWF Intercontinental titles, one from Curt Hennig (below).

Hart defeated the weighty Yokozuna (with Roddy Piper acting as special referee) to win his second WWF World title at WrestleMania X. He would go on to win three more before leaving the federation for WCW.

BRET HART DID not defeat Bill Goldberg at Starrcade '99. Roddy Piper made sure of that when he ordered the bell rung prematurely just as Hart was locking his sharpshooter on Goldberg. Bret Hart did defeat Goldberg the following night at *Nitro*. Kevin Nash and Scott Hall made sure of that when they attacked Goldberg with a baseball bat, enabling Hart to make the pin. Cheating is exactly what Hart had resorted to. He had also become a member of the new New World Order.

There have been plenty of cheaters in wrestling history. Hart just happens to be one of them. And not every cheater in wresting history has been successful in the ring. Bret Hart has been more successful than just about all of them.

Once upon a time, it didn't matter if opponents were stronger or bigger than the "Hitman." He had the wrestling ability to chop them down to size. These days, he is such a bitter man who has no trouble giving in to the subversive forces that threaten to destroy the sport (or, at the very least, make it more interesting).

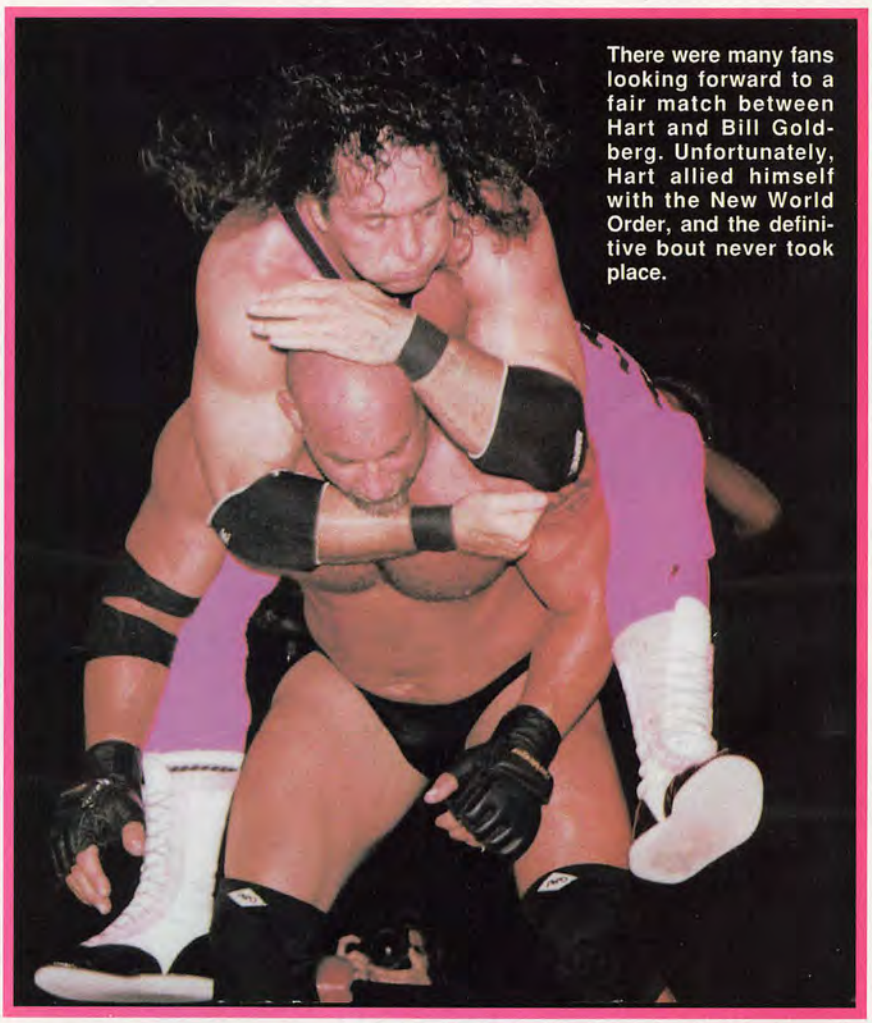
Most fans have lost all respect for Hart.

Still, there's one thing we have to consider:

Remember all those times he has told us, "I'm the best there is, the best there was, the best there ever will be"? He's probably right.

Bret Hart has accomplished something that Ric Flair, Hulk Hogan, Buddy Rogers, Lou Thesz, Bruno Sammartino, and all the other greats in wrestling history haven't come or never came close to accomplishing: He has won every major title in WCW and the WWF at least once.

Bret Hart is the first man to ever win the WCW World, WWF World, WCW U.S., WWF Intercontinental, WWF World tag team, and WCW World tag team championships. He completed the big six on December 7, 1999, in Madison, Wisconsin, when he and Goldberg defeated Creative Control



There were many fans looking forward to a fair match between Hart and Bill Goldberg. Unfortunately, Hart allied himself with the New World Order, and the definitive bout never took place.

The master stroke of Hart's deception was his relationship with Chris Benoit. Benoit had been struggling to elevate himself. Hart acted like he wanted to help, then blindsided him with his actions.

for the WCW World tag team title.

His run to immortality began on January 26, 1987, when he and Jim Neidhart—The Hart Foundation—beat The British Bulldogs for Bret's first WWF World tag team title. So the WWF and WCW tag belts served as bookends for Bret's magnificent career.

"There are a lot of bad things you can say about Bret Hart," said WCW broadcaster Mike Tenay. "You can say that he's a whiner. You can say that he has turned his back on the fans once again. You can say that he can't be trusted and that he has besmirched what has been a magnificent career by letting his bitterness get the best of him. But you can't deny that he has had an absolutely marvelous career."

He has proven the skeptics wrong by winning singles titles. He has forged ahead with his career after getting screwed by Vince McMahon. He has retired and unretired. He has bravely continued to wrestle after the tragic death of his beloved younger brother Owen. He has made decisions that haven't always been popular. But one label seems to keep on following him around: champion.

Oh, sure, he fooled us again at *Nitro*. Wrestling fans had welcomed Bret back into their good graces, only to watch in shock as he, Hall, Nash, and Jeff Jarrett spray-painted "NWO" on both Goldberg and Piper. The band had picked up their instruments once again ... and Hart was playing lead guitar.

Now it is up to somebody in WCW to come up with an appropriate way to punish Hart and counter the new NWO. Whatever that person does, however, he can be sure of one thing: Hart will continue to find ways to win, just as he always has.

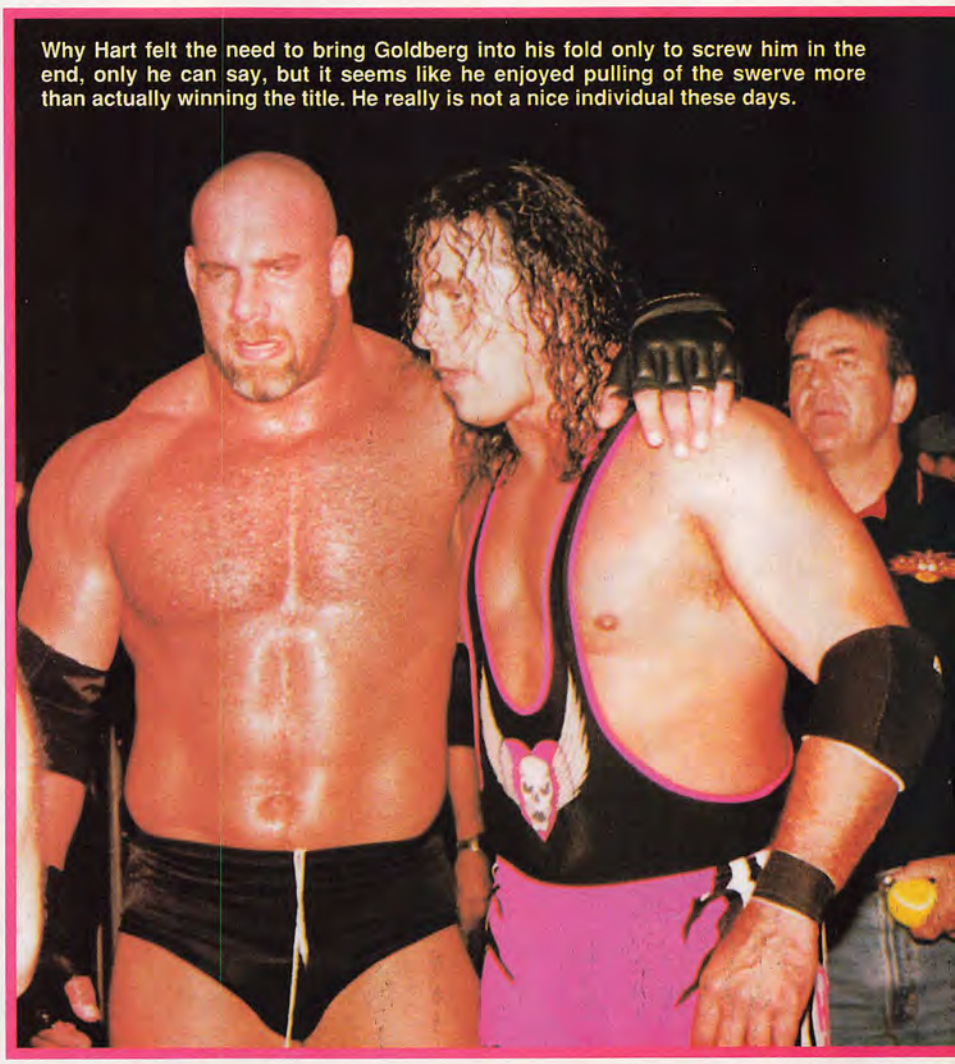
Just when we thought it was safe to declare that the "Hitman" was washed up ... he proved us wrong again.

That's what champions do.

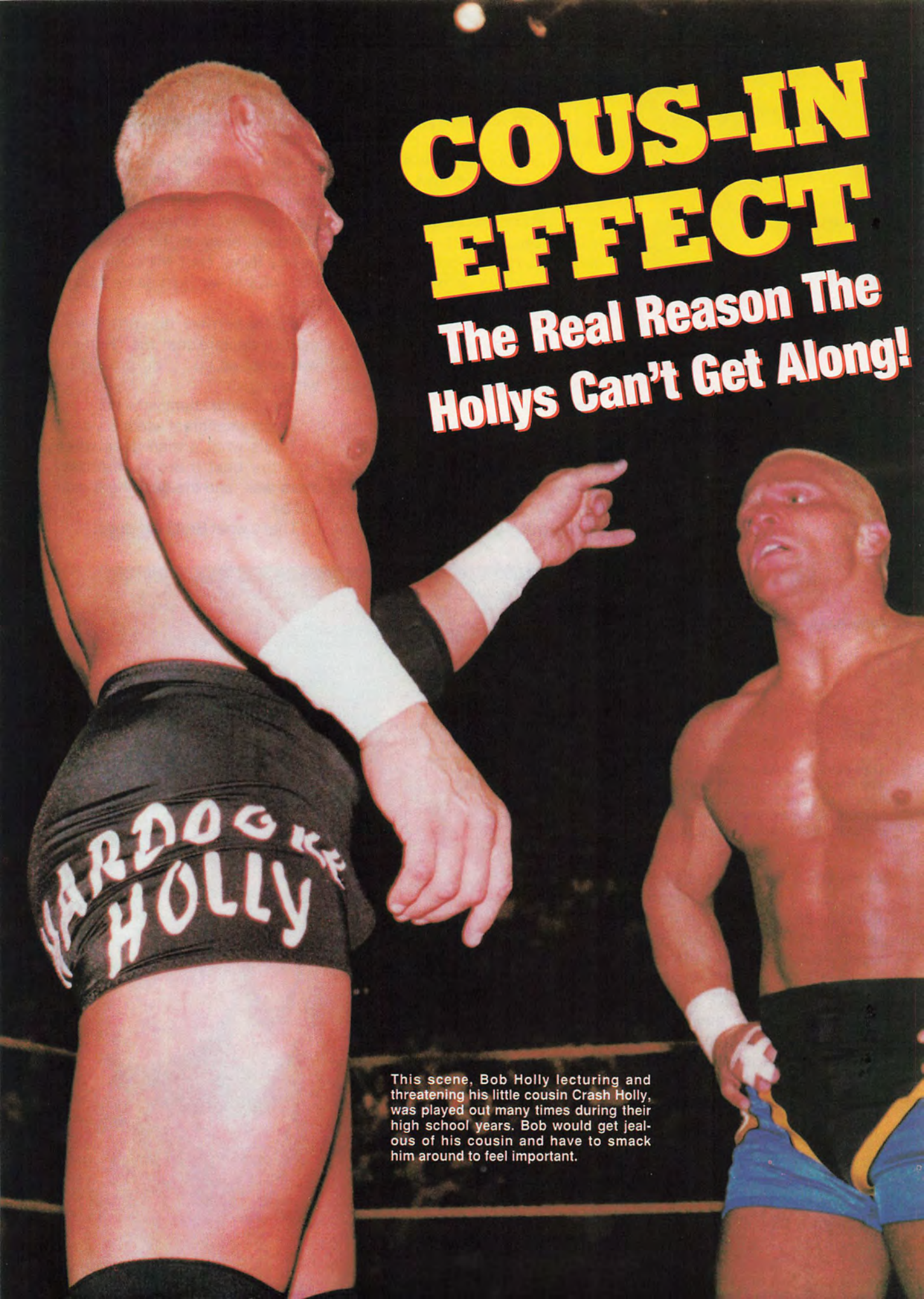
That's what great wrestlers do.

That's what a man does when he's the best there is, the best there was, and the best there ever will be.

That's what Bret Hart does. □



Why Hart felt the need to bring Goldberg into his fold only to screw him in the end, only he can say, but it seems like he enjoyed pulling of the swerve more than actually winning the title. He really is not a nice individual these days.

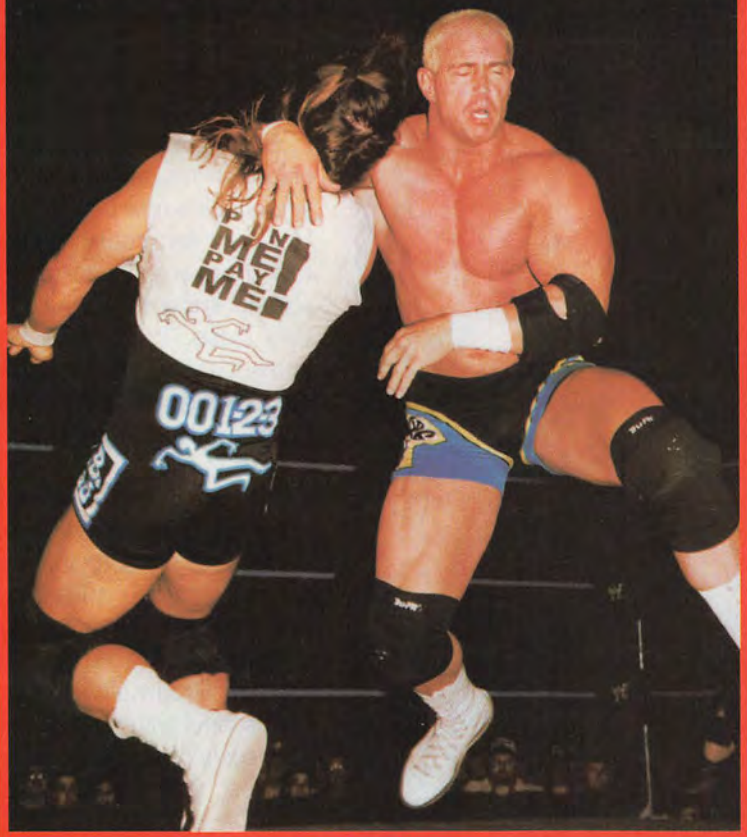


COUS-IN EFFECT

The Real Reason The Hollys Can't Get Along!

This scene, Bob Holly lecturing and threatening his little cousin Crash Holly, was played out many times during their high school years. Bob would get jealous of his cousin and have to smack him around to feel important.

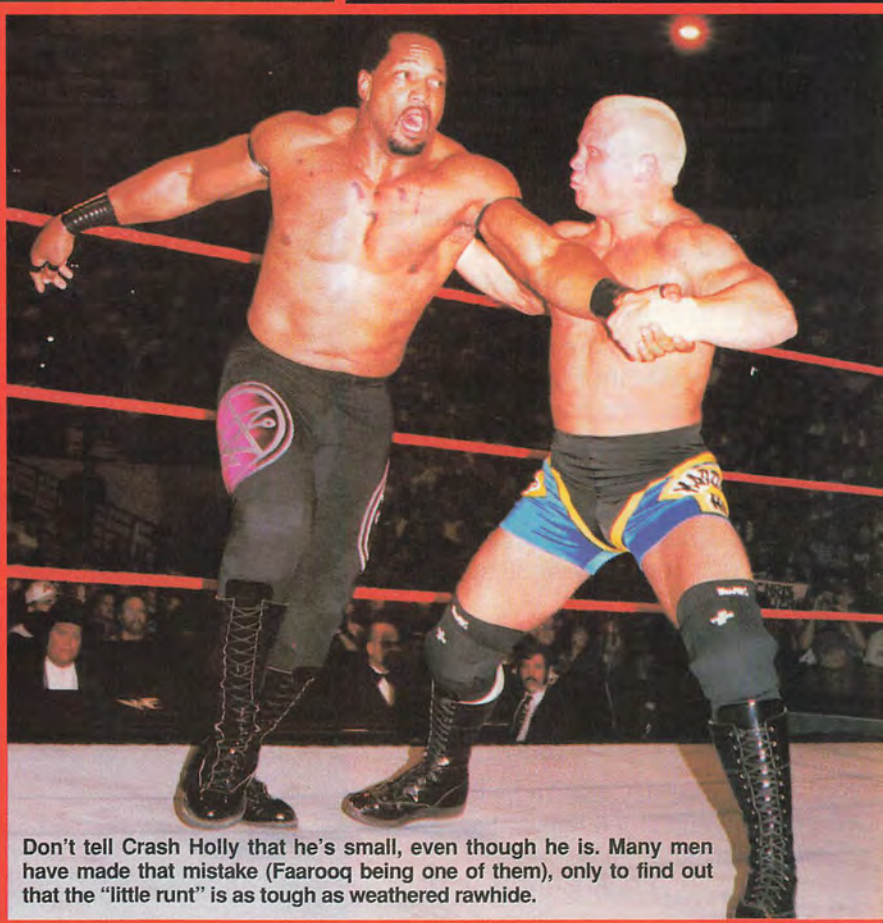
When it comes to book learning, Hardcore has never been a genius. In the ring, though, he's a quick study. Al Snow, another individual who is plagued with a bit of psychosis, has had some brutal matches with the older Holly cousin.



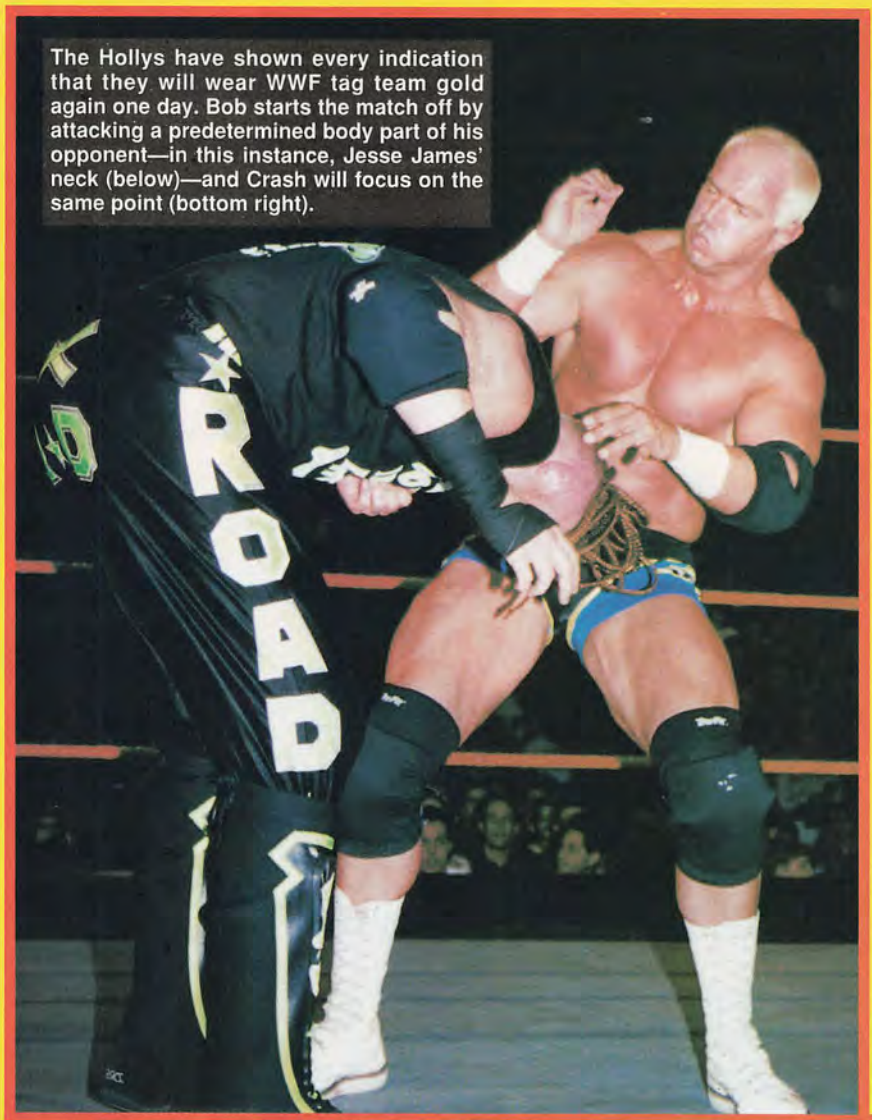
There's nothing new about the relationship between cousins Bob and Crash Holly. Their rivalry goes back to high school, when Crash was a little too smart for his own good

By Dave Rosenbaum

THIS WAS TYPICAL of the Hollys: Bob "Hardcore" Holly was wrestling Chris Jericho on *Smackdown*, and Crash Holly was in his cousin's corner, there to support Bob in any way he could. Just when Jericho was about to put away Hardcore, Crash stormed



Don't tell Crash Holly that he's small, even though he is. Many men have made that mistake (Faarooq being one of them), only to find out that the "little runt" is as tough as weathered rawhide.



The Hollys have shown every indication that they will wear WWF tag team gold again one day. Bob starts the match off by attacking a predetermined body part of his opponent—in this instance, Jesse James' neck (below)—and Crash will focus on the same point (bottom right).

"We get along fine," Bob insisted. "No problems between us at all. Hey, you don't become WWF tag team champions if you can't get along."

"Not a problem," Crash Holly agreed.

But there's more to this relationship than meets the eye. First of all, you should know that Bob and Crash Holly are first cousins. Their fathers are brothers. Second of all, you should know that their fathers are very close. Third of all, you should know that their fathers married sisters. Therefore, it's not merely a very tight family—it's also a very condensed family.

You also need to know that they grew up in the same town in Alabama and went to the same high school, although a few years apart. And that's where our story begins.

"Bob wasn't a very good student," recalled Greg Kelner, who attended high school with both Hollys. "I'd say on a scale of one to 10, with 10 being the best, Bob was about a four, and Crash was about a seven. That kind of angered Bob, because he was older than Crash and figured he should be smarter, too.

"Bob was in 12th grade, Crash

into the ring, nailed Jericho with a belt, and earned his cousin a well-deserved loss by disqualification.

This was typical of the Hollys, too: Recently, Hardcore lost a singles match to Rikishi Phatu. Now, for those of you who haven't seen him, Rikishi is not exactly a picture of fitness. Let's just say that he lives up to his last name. Hardcore lost the match. Crash laughed at him. Hardcore responded by beating up his cousin.

One day, Bob and Crash Holly are good enough and getting along well enough to win the WWF World tag team championship or a tag team battle royal.

The next day, they're getting their butts kicked in the ring ... then kicking each other's butts.

Why can't Bob and Crash Holly get along?

was in 10th grade, but they both graduated in the same class, so that should tell you something."

It was during that final year of high school, when Bob and Crash were both seniors, that they developed a closer relationship. They had always been boyhood pals, wrestling in the basement, but because of the age difference, they had different friends. But when Crash caught up to Bob in school, a lot of Bob's friends had graduated, so Crash's friends became Bob's friends.

"They partied a lot," recalled Mike Knowles, another classmate. "And Crash always got the girls, which drove Bob crazy. This one night at a party, Crash is standing there, he's got two of the best-looking girls in school hanging on his arm, and Bob just walks up to him and dumps a bottle of beer over his head.

"Bob stands there like, 'What are you going do about it?' And Crash looks at him for a second, then walks away, goes to the bathroom, grabs a towel, and wipes himself off. I think that was Bob's way of telling Crash, 'You might be smarter than me, and you might get the girls, but I'm tougher.'"

Perhaps that was the start of the Hardcore Holly we know today, a man who's not above cracking a glass pitcher or coffee mug in someone's face.

"Bob always tried to act bigger than he really was, which got him into some trouble," Knowles recalled. "But he never backed down."

These days, Bob and Crash bill themselves as super heavyweights and want to take on only the biggest men in wrestling, such as The Acolytes—Bradshaw and Faarooq. Most of the time, however, it seems as if the Hollys like it best when they're taking on each other.

"Crash could never help himself," said Tracey Martel, another high school classmate. "When Bob did something stupid, which was most of the time, Crash would laugh at him. And then Bob would get angry and go after him, and they'd be fighting on the floor. Let me tell you something: I wouldn't say that they can't get along; I'd say they've always had this weird relationship, this strange rivalry, which is part love and part resentment. The way they are now is the way they've always been."

Hardcore's high school chums probably didn't realize that they were witnessing the birth of a WWF superstar when he began confronting Crash in school and at parties, but they sure do recognize that fact now.

According to famed wrestling psychologist Dr. Sidney M. Basil, our personalities are formed in adolescence, and feelings of love, hatred, resentment, or rivalry that develop in the formative years are rarely erased in the adult years. A person who hated another person in high school is likely to carry that hatred with him for the rest of his life, even while feelings formed later about other people are easily forgotten.

"They are still having this fight between the older, less intelligent cousin who never got the girls and the younger, more intelligent cousin who always got the girls," Dr. Basil said.

Sometimes, the Hollys are able to put aside their rivalry and succeed in the ring. But most of the time, it's like they're 18 years old again and fighting the same old fights. □

ASYAN INFLUENCE

Why Chyna Owes Her WCW "Counterpart" A Debt Of Gratitude

A woman wrestling a member of the same sex and winning a major title is one thing; a woman defeating male competitors regularly is another. Chyna is the WWF's latest success story, but she ought to give Asya an assist for forcing the issue

By Mitch Lucas

THESE LAST FEW years haven't been easy on Chyna. "The Ninth Wonder Of The World" has had to endure both the cruelty and support of the fans, an on-again, off-again relationship with Hunter Hearst Helmsley, and even a juvenile friendship (if you can call it that) with Mark Henry, which actually started when he accused her of sexual harassment.

Then again, these last few years

have also been rewarding for Chyna. She has risen above her problems to become one of the most respected figures in the WWF. Whether purists want to admit it or not, Fabulous Moolah, Mae Young, Cora Combs, and other legends of women's wrestling weren't able to successfully compete against men and women on a regular basis.

Chyna has accomplished the feat relatively quickly ... and seemingly easily.

In 1999, Chyna did more than establish herself as a dominant force. She cemented that status by winning the Intercontinental championship in a wild brawl with Jeff Jarrett in October. But with so much excitement and controversy swirling around her, Chyna has likely failed to recognize one of the key components in her success: Asya, whose exploits in WCW have spread rapidly to Stamford, Connecticut. Well, maybe she does recognize it, but

When it comes to competing against the male contingent of WCW, Asya can be pretty dangerous. Eddy Guerrero has found out first-hand how well Asya stacks up (top left and bottom).

Although she wrestles in the WWF, Chyna (left) has reportedly kept close tabs on Asya's progress with The Revolution (bottom right). Separated by companies, these women seem to have drawn inspiration from each other.

don't even waste your time trying to get her to admit it.

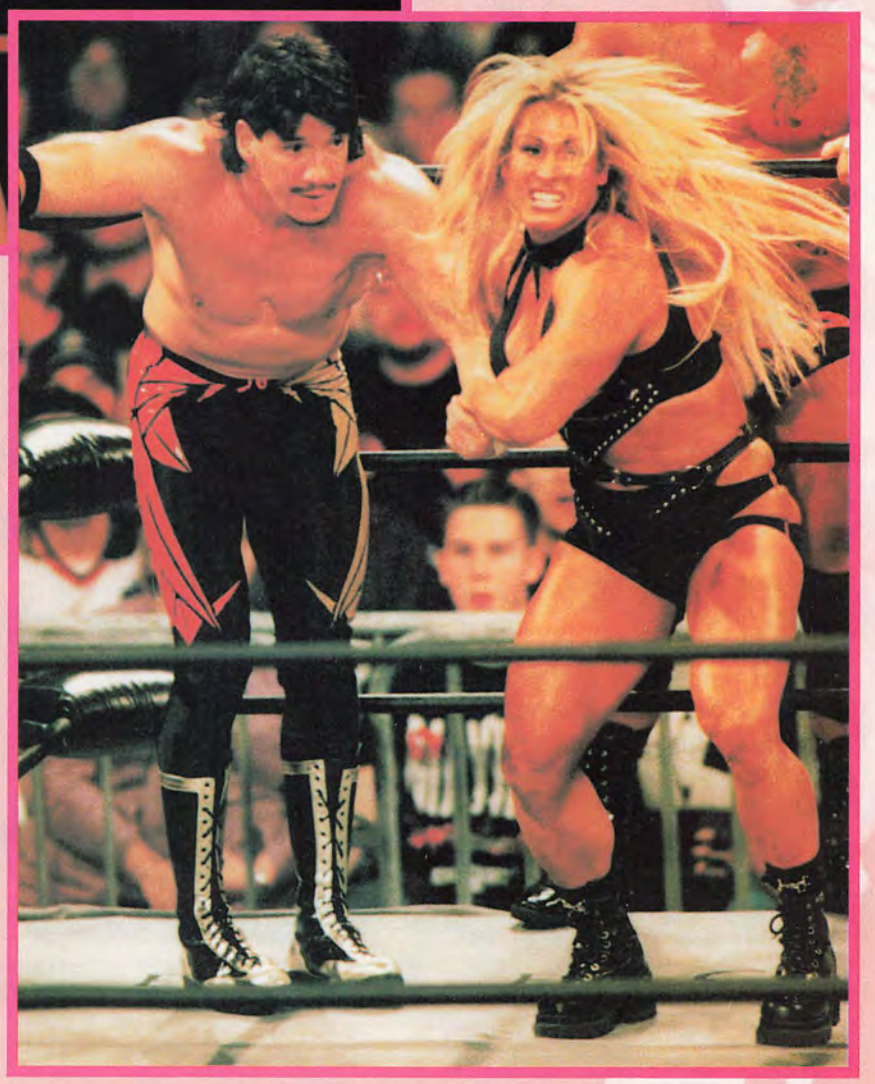
"No one up here will admit this, but Chyna keeps a close eye on everything Asya does," said one wrestler who knows Chyna well, but wished to remain anonymous for this story. "Now Chyna was never jealous of Asya in any way. That just wasn't the case. Watching Asya manhandle—excuse the pun—several of the male wrestlers in WCW fired Chyna up. It gave her the incentive to go out and smash the glass ceiling that's always kept the WWF women down. It's really phenomenal when you stop and think about what she's done. She never asked for a match with another woman in the WWF. She set her goals higher right from the day she first showed up."

WWF insiders would never acknowledge Asya's presence, but there is no question that Chyna's demeanor changed when Asya burst onto the WCW scene. Not coincidentally, soon after Asya arrived, Chyna pushed for the opportunity to get in to the King of the Ring tournament.

The bulging muscles. The no-nonsense attitude. The looks of confidence. The menacing stare. Chyna saw a lot of herself in Asya, and she wanted to make sure Asya couldn't upstage her, even though they were wrestling in different promotions.

So rather than wrestling for the WWF's women's title, Chyna felt she could compete with many of the promotion's men.

One man, Chris Jericho, would likely dispute that claim, even after a violent feud with Chyna. How Chyna accomplished the



task of elevating herself into contention for the Intercontinental title wasn't a normal course of action (she signed a blank contract without the knowledge of then-champ Jarrett), but no matter the tactic—and despite the fact that she lost the belt to Jericho in December only to find herself co-champion in January—Chyna remains a force.

In fact, one has to wonder if Jericho would have beaten Chyna at Armageddon without injuring her hand before the match.

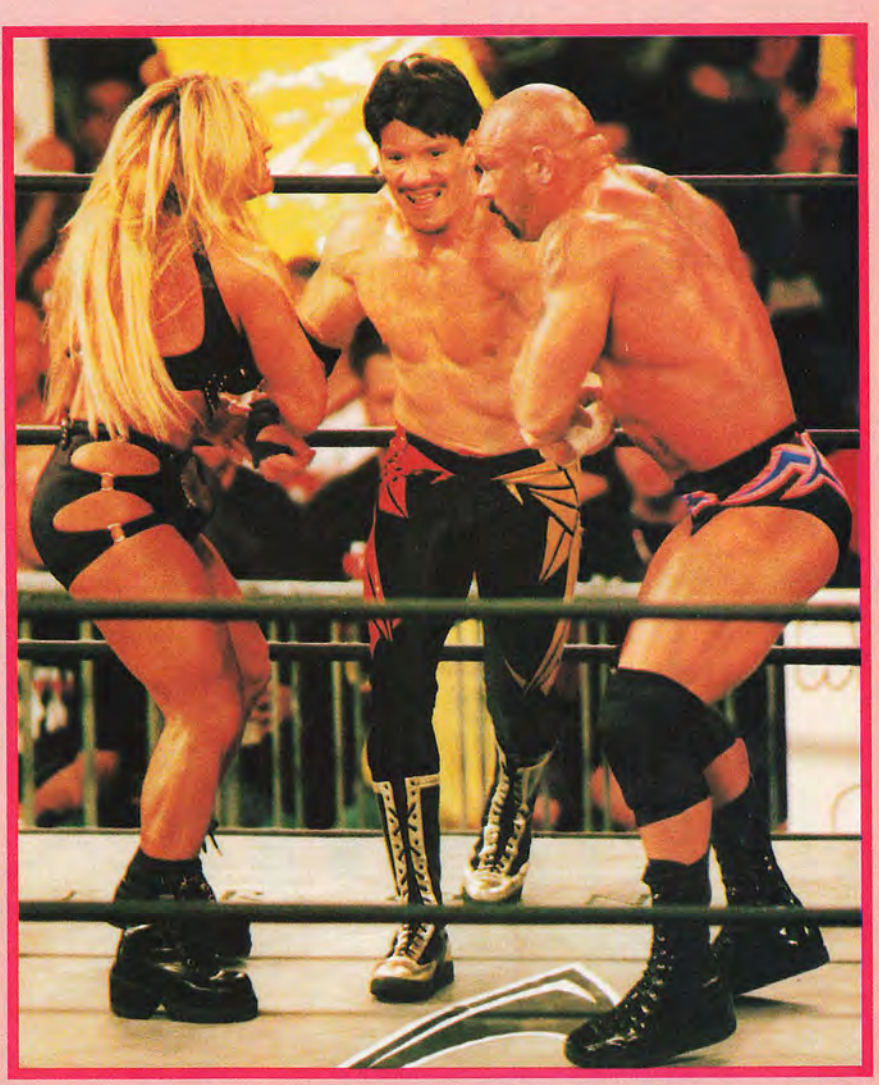
"I'm not certain he could have," our source said. "I'm not certain Jericho even believed he could win without an edge. Chyna has tremendous power. Believe me—I've seen her work out. Most of the wrestlers in the WWF don't see that kind of power in a lot of their fellow competitors, much less in a female competitor. It takes guys aback, and by then she's got you. Her aspirations when she came to the WWF included winning a world title, and like I said, she had no interest in any women's version. People laughed then, but no one is laughing now."

Asya's story is similar to Chyna's. When Asya entered WCW in 1998 as a personal assistant to Ric Flair, many mistook the former bodybuilder for another one of Flair's decorations. The "Nature Boy" knew better.

"You don't get to be a 14-time world champion by being an idiot," Flair laughed. "I knew the potential she had from the beginning. Now everyone else is finding out."

When her business relationship with Flair didn't work out, Asya managed to convince Shane Douglas and the rest of The Revolution she could be a great asset as a bodyguard and, if need be, a woman who would not mind tangling with men. Sound like a familiar story?

"She combines strength with a surprising knowledge of this business, and you know how important that is to me," Douglas said. "I definitely wouldn't want to be on the opposite side of the ring from Asya. Most people who are end up getting hurt."



Chyna has experienced more success than Asya so far, but a lot of experts believe it's just a matter of time before Asya reaches the same heights as her WWF counterpart.

"Nobody realizes how strong she is until she wraps those legs around you and takes you down to the mat," said Eddy Guerrero. "I'm telling you, I couldn't breathe. When I first saw her, I wrote her off as one of Flair's little tramps. I gotta admit that I was wrong about that."

A lot of people are saying the same thing.

"If she wanted to, I think she could do what Chyna's doing," said Killer Kowalski, the man who trained Chyna. "It might take her a little longer, simply because of all the politics in WCW. But if Chyna can do it, Asya can. I can see her giving a lot of these pretty boys a tough time."

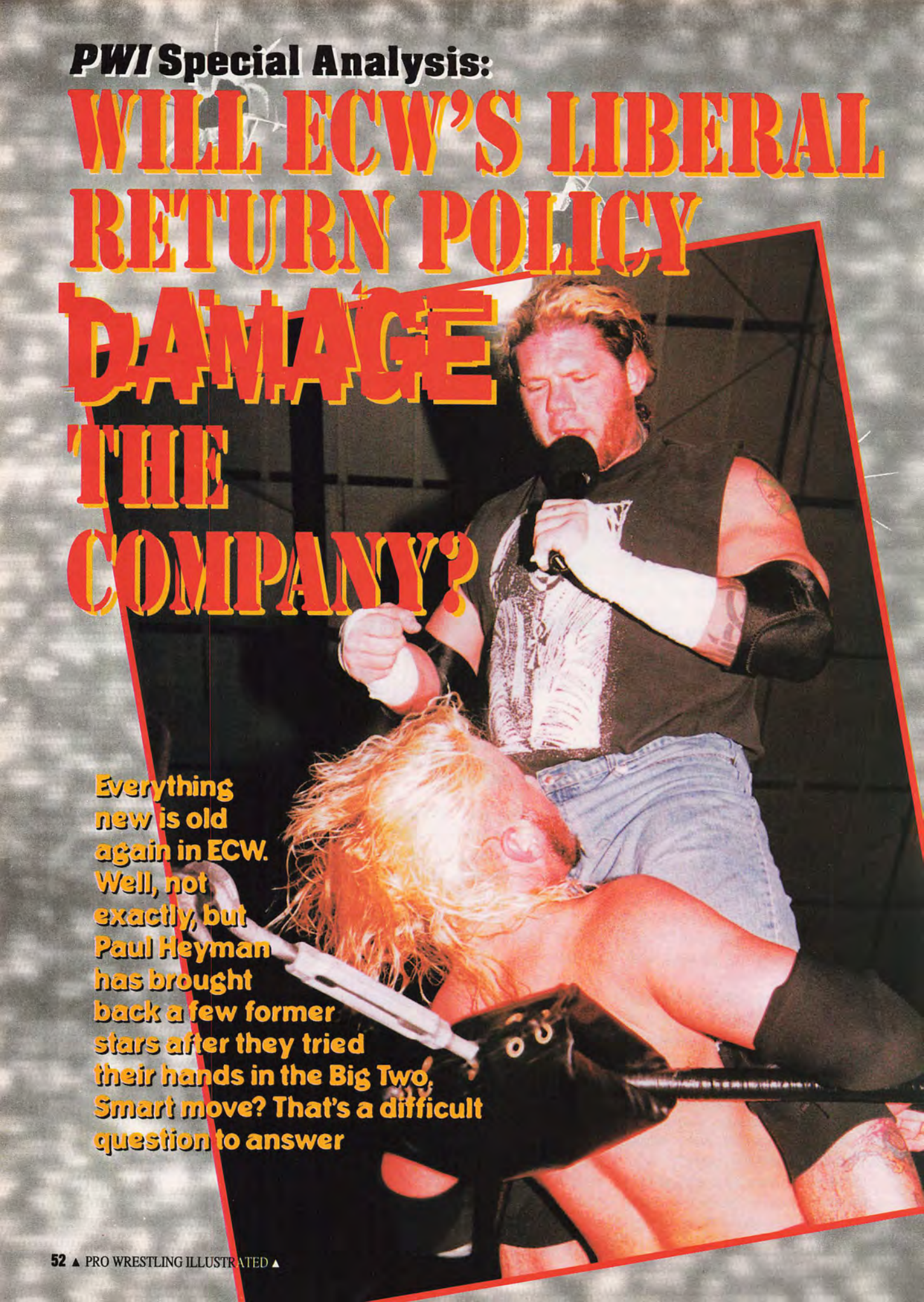
Douglas agreed.

"She's a cruiserweight threat, no question," he said. "Madusa's title is in jeopardy, and so is Jeff Jarrett's U.S. belt. I'm sure Asya would love to be the first woman to hold the U.S. title or maybe even the World belt. She'd be fired up for matches that could bring her some gold."

Asya stokes Chyna ... Chyna fires up Asya. Perhaps these ladies should exchange cards. Chyna should send Asya a thank you card for her success in 1999, and maybe this year, Asya will be the one to express some gratitude. □

***PWI* Special Analysis:**

WILL ECW'S LIBERAL RETURN POLICY DAMAGE THE COMPANY?



Everything new is old again in ECW. Well, not exactly, but Paul Heyman has brought back a few former stars after they tried their hands in the Big Two. Smart move? That's a difficult question to answer

It's 1997 all over again! Raven (opposite page) is among a handful of former ECW stars to have returned to the promotion in recent months. He has even resumed his feud with another ECW returnee, The Sandman (below). Is it smart for ECW to welcome these men back?

By Dan Murphy

"THIS IS EXTREME!" Paul Heyman's voice booms over the blaring beat of White Zombie's "Thunderkiss '65." Thus ECW broadcasts open, with highlight reel shots of Sabu springboarding off a chair onto the top rope and into the third row ... and Rob Van Dam and Jerry Lynn trading reversals at a lightning-quick pace ... and Tommy Dreamer delivering the chair shot heard 'round the world to a helpless Raven.

ECW has been on the cutting edge of wrestling since it was known as Eastern Championship Wrestling and featured barbed-wire matches involving hardcore kings such as Eddie Gilbert and Terry Funk.

Being cutting edge is what won ECW a steadily increasing fan following as it evolved and became Extreme Championship Wrestling. It's what made the promotion attractive to world-class talent such as Dreamer, Sabu, Taz, Mike Awesome, and Masato Tanaka. Hey, Steve Austin even started his transformation from "Stunning" to "Stone-Cold" in ECW. ECW changed the direction wrestling was taking by being cutting edge and revolutionary, and it finally paid off big for the company when it landed a lucrative contract with The Nashville Network last summer.

But for a federation renowned for discovering and developing new talent, ECW is experiencing a strong feeling of deja vu. In the past few months, the federation has welcomed back Raven, The Sandman, Mikey Whipwreck, and 2 Cold Scorpio (briefly)—all former stars who left ECW in search of greater fame and fortune in the WWF or WCW.

The result: For one, ECW now has a stronger roster than it had before those wrestlers came back.

Mikey Whipwreck's Whippersnapper didn't earn him many big wins in WCW, though he did make good use of it against C.W. Anderson shortly after coming back to ECW. His return will help ECW ... in the short term at least. The long term could be a different story entirely.

That much is obvious. Raven and Sandman are two of the biggest stars ECW has ever produced. Bringing them back when they became available was a no-brainer, right?

Not necessarily. If you look at the big picture, everything gets so much more complicated. Now that ECW has gained world title status from *PWI* and its sister magazines and, more importantly, is reaching out to a national audience, it is crucial that Heyman keeps an eye on that big picture and plans for the long term.

By welcoming some of ECW's prodigal sons back with open arms, Heyman might be unwittingly inviting current ECW stars to try their hands in the Big Two.

Case in point: The Sandman. When Sandman jumped to WCW, Heyman said he would never be willing to take him back. "The way The Sandman left is a classic example of someone we wouldn't have any desire to bring back, because it sets the wrong precedent," Heyman told Associate Editor Frank Krewda in an interview published in the February issue of *PWI*. "I wouldn't be interested in giving back a job to someone who didn't even have the courtesy to say, 'I'm leaving.'"

A little more than a year after he left, Sandman is not only back, but he's wrestling in main events against a lot of people who have remained with the company in his absence. Heyman recently explained to *PWI* that he despises Sandman personally, but brought him back because his presence could help the company in a number of ways.

But what message does that send to the likes of Justin Credible, Lance Storm, and Mike Awesome?

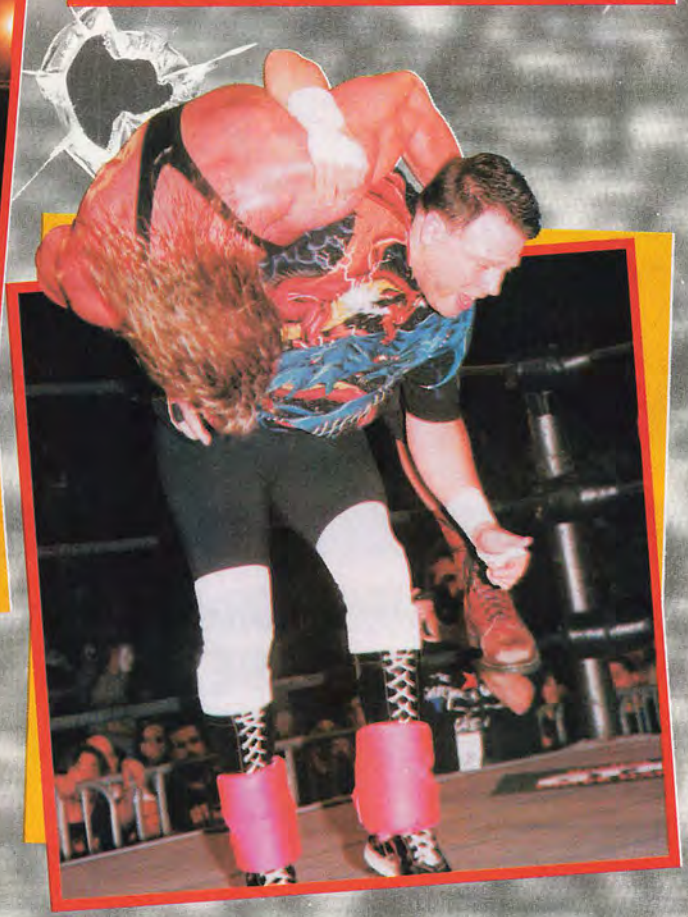
First, it sends the message that Heyman is willing to put his personal feelings aside in favor of his company's best interests. It also *seems* like he's sending the following message to wrestlers being courted by the WWF and WCW: "You're welcome to try your luck with the WWF or WCW. If things don't work out, you always have a home here."

Another matter to consider is the immediate success of returning stars who may have struggled in the WWF or WCW. Because of a variety of factors, including federation style, rule differences, and politics, often wrestlers coming out of ECW have a measure of difficulty in the Big Two. When they become dominant again in ECW upon their return, some fans might jump to the wrong conclusion.

"There's no doubt that Paul Heyman is one of the best judges of wrestling talent in the world today," said Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker. "In some cases, the WWF and WCW don't make the best use of the wrestlers that come their way after they've been big stars in ECW. I give him a lot of credit for promoting his wrestlers in such a way that they become stars in ECW, but he has to also be a little concerned about the way some fans will look at some of the wrestlers he has brought back. Some people are going to say, 'Well, Sandman was a huge star in ECW, then he was just another guy in WCW, so that means WCW is stronger than ECW.' That's how they might *perceive* the situation. Whether that's an accurate perception is subject to debate."

While the return of Raven and Sandman offers an intriguing situation with Tommy Dreamer, and

Fans just discovering *ECW On TNN* and seeing Whipwreck and Sandman might not recall the WCW stints of Sandman (left, vs. Kendall Windham) and Mikey Whipwreck (below, vs. Van Hammer) too fondly. But did they have much to lose by giving it a go in WCW?



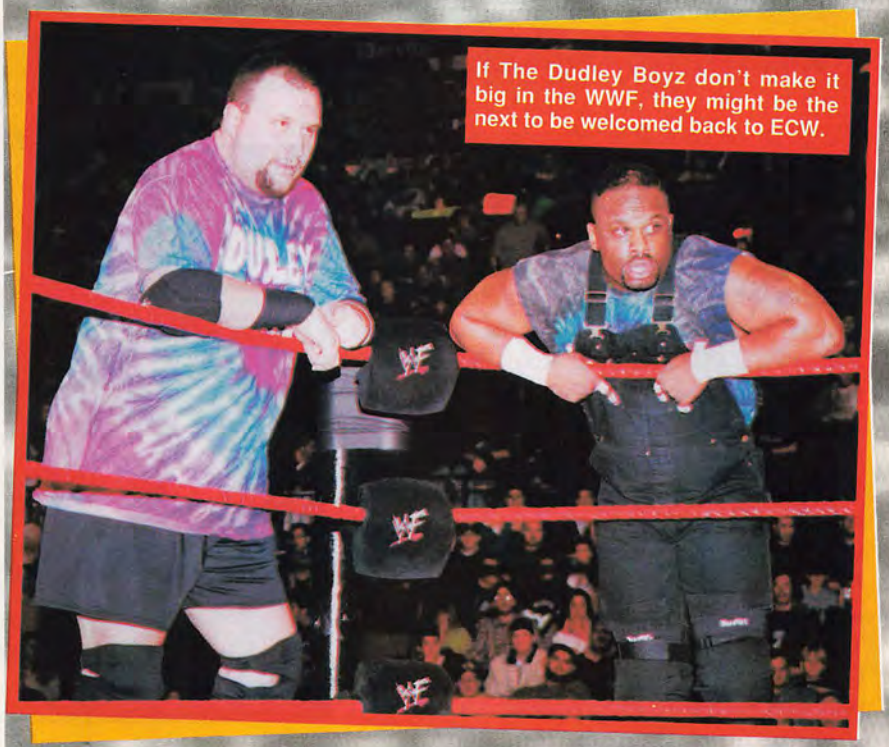
the arrival of Whipwreck is making some fans salivate at potential matches pitting him against Rob Van Dam, Jerry Lynn, Super Crazy, and Yoshihiro Tajiri, we still have some reservations. ECW has always had a backbone of talent fiercely loyal to the ideals upon which ECW was created. With Taz and Buh Buh Ray Dudley in the WWF, Shane Douglas in WCW, and Dreamer perhaps one more injury away from retirement, ECW's roster still isn't that deep.

What happens if Dreamer's injuries get worse ... if Awesome and Tanaka decide to spend more time in FMW ... if Sandman and Heyman have a falling-out?

Does ECW have enough warriors willing to step and take their places?

Or, bolstered by the examples of Sandman and Raven, will the current stars jump ship seeking fortune elsewhere?

What do they really have to lose by trying? □



If The Dudley Boyz don't make it big in the WWF, they might be the next to be welcomed back to ECW.

THE Y2K

WRESTLING'S 50 HOTTEST QUESTIONS ANSWERED!

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?

Chris Benoit	*18%*
Rob Van Dam	*16%*
Jeff Hardy	*15%*
Billy Kidman	*14%*
Rey Misterio Jr.	*9%*
X-Pac	*6%*
Eddy Guerrero	*5%*
Yoshihiro Tajiri	*2%*
Others	*15%*

Benoit: pound-for-pound best

In what was considered his breakout year, Chris Benoit captured the WCW U.S. and TV titles in 1999. That said, his size prevented him from defeating Sid Vicious and making headway in the World title scene. A U.S. title win over Scott Hall or, better yet, a World title win over Bret Hart could put him back in the running for the number-one spot in the 2000 *"PWI* 500." Rob Van Dam, who placed number two in the 1999 "500," had reached his 20th month as ECW TV champion as of press time. If he beats World champ Mike Awesome, he would most likely surpass Benoit in next year's poll. Billy Kidman, who was the top vote-getter last year, dropped by three points. Eddy Guerrero has fallen considerably since '98, when he placed first in our poll. X-Pac's recent antics against Kane and Tori might have caused him to lose respectability. He plummeted seven points. Jeff Hardy is a major story here, debuting with 15 percent.

X-Pac is not winning in style

ECW's Yoshihiro Tajiri

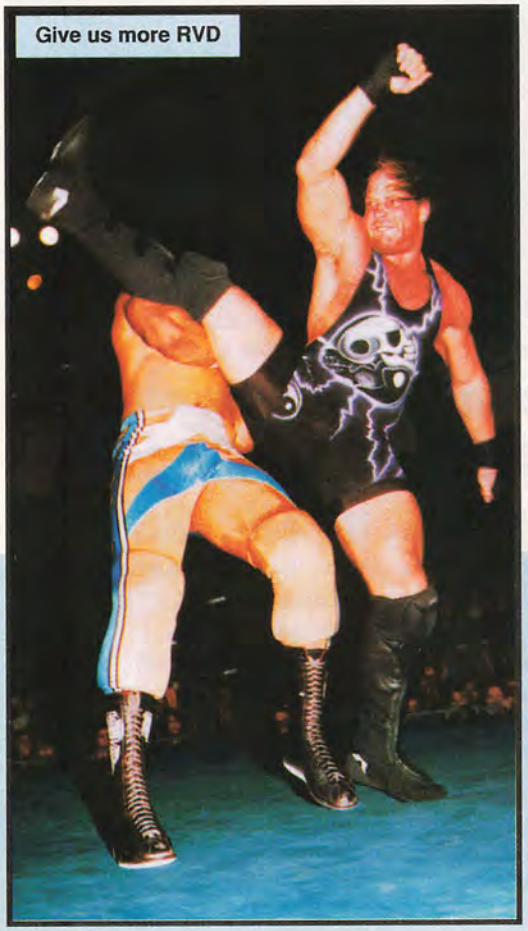
PWI POLL

*THERE COULDN'T BE a more appropriate time for this "**PWI** Poll." In the year 2000, at the dawn of a new millennium, the sport remains as controversial and exciting as ever. The competition between the WWF and WCW remains fierce, and mainstream coverage of wrestling is much more common. The "**PWI** Poll," as it does each year, provides a snapshot analysis of the current state of wrestling and what its future may be.*

PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED sent 200 ballots (up 24 from last year) via postal carrier and e-mail to a cross-section of the sport's participants and observers: champions, contenders, preliminary wrestlers, managers, announcers, referees, journalists, photographers, presidents, commissioners, matchmakers, and promoters.

Our 50-question poll is divided into two sections. Part I consists of general and specific questions about wrestling. Part II, dubbed "Best Of The Best," focuses on the most practical aspect of the sport: the effectiveness of particular holds and maneuvers. See if you agree with the opinions of wrestling's experts.

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?



Rob Van Dam	*20%*
Chris Benoit	*17%*
Rey Misterio Jr.	*16%*
Sabu	*14%*
Bill Goldberg	*14%*
Mick Foley	*7%*
Bret Hart	*3%*
The Hardy Boyz	*3%*
Others	*6%*

Rob Van Dam pulled ahead of Chris Benoit in this category. The experts might think Benoit has greater ability, but Van Dam's blend of lethal martial arts and graceful agility make him the winner. No doubt Van Dam's many ECW TV title defenses against Jerry Lynn improved his standing. Rey Misterio Jr. placed third, capturing the vote of cruiserweight enthusiasts. Some voters like the matches of Bill Goldberg, although his two-prong attack—the spear and jackhammer—received criticism for being too predictable. Those who prefer Goldberg's matches might have considered the awesome crowd reactions he receives. Mick Foley made a respectable showing based on his ability to withstand tremendous amounts of punishment. Bret Hart's matches are popular among wrestling traditionalists, and The Hardy Boyz continue to make strides.

Mankind doles out a fistful of sock

3. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?

ECW	*39%*
WCW	*34%*
WWF	*27%*

This question produced the most shocking result of the poll. We at *PWI* received some criticism when we granted world title status to ECW in July. This is proof we made the right decision. ECW jumped an amazing 31 points to claim the top spot for the first time, ending WCW's seven-year domination of this category. Response to this question also shed light on something else: The WWF may be attracting a larger audience than any other federation, but its viewers aren't tuning in for the wrestling. Another reason behind ECW's rise is its procurement of a national cable contract with The Nashville Network. With each passing week, WCW becomes more similar to the WWF. ECW has established itself as a no-nonsense alternative.

4. WHICH IS THE PREMIER FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?

WWF	*59%*
WCW	*35%*
ECW	*6%*

Within a two-year span, the WWF has reversed momentum against WCW. In our 1998 poll, WCW earned 61 percent, while the WWF received 35 percent of the vote. In early-1999, WCW had only a one percent lead. The WWF is thrashing WCW in 2000 as badly as it thrashed the NWA circa 1987. Negative publicity about Owen Hart's death and Rena Mero's lawsuit plagued the WWF, but its addition to Nasdaq and its selling of public shares boosted its image in the mainstream consciousness. For the dwindling number of Americans still not familiar with the WWF, the debut of *Smackdown* on UPN probably changed that. Likewise, extensive coverage of the McMahons as owners of one of America's largest family-run businesses heightened the WWF's profile. WCW received its share of mainstream publicity when its stars were featured on collector's series covers of *TV Guide*.

Rock vs. Triple-H is a hot ticket

Bret vs. Sting

5. WOULD YOU JUDGE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?

Status Quo	*32%*
Promising	*23%*
Cloudy	*22%*
Shining	*19%*
Hopeless	*4%*

This question resulted in a mixed message. Should the highest-scoring classification, "status quo," warrant satisfaction or concern? It's probably not so bad. Wrestling programs on cable-television and pay-per-view continue to be among the most popular in either sector. *Raw* and *Nitro* on Monday nights have become a staple of American culture, much like *Monday Night Football*. In fact, wrestling has taken a significant demographic of the NFL's audience: young men between the ages of 18 and 24. The fact that "promising" was a reasonably close second was also reassuring. However, those who believe wrestling has a "cloudy" forecast comprise 22 percent of individuals surveyed. Most of those people couldn't cite specific reasons behind their answer, other than that they believe the sport has reached its peak and can go no further. The "hopeless" classification received four percent, up from zero percent last year. The WWF's loss of sponsors due to its lewd content, the sexual nature of WCW's programs, and ECW's reliance on excessive violence are making some people tired of wrestling altogether.

6. WHO REALLY RULES MONDAY NIGHTS?

WWF	*77%*
WCW	*23%*

Frankly, we're surprised WCW made this good a showing. Six months ago, WCW probably would have garnered even fewer votes. The WWF is averaging a 5.8 rating during most segments, with WCW pulling a 3.0. *Nitro's* figures are up slightly because of the jump of Vince Russo, Ed Ferrara, Bill Banks, and Terry Taylor—who were largely responsible for *Raw's* content—to WCW. The departure of the WWF's creative department hasn't resulted in immediate damage to *Raw's* appeal. Vince McMahon has made it a personal mission to ensure the program will not suffer because of the mass exodus. Also, *Raw's* characters seem larger than life compared to the stars of WCW. Likewise, there seems to be a cohesion of purpose behind WWF storylines: having programs revolve around a central theme, designed to persuade viewers to purchase PPV events. *Nitro* has become more compelling, but hasn't developed a major hook to reel in previous viewers. WCW's decision to drop *Nitro's* third hour is proof to many that the program is struggling.

7. IF YOU COULD READ ONE BOOK BY ANY WRESTLING STAR (NOT PUBLISHED SO FAR), WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Vince McMahon	*37%*
Steve Austin	*19%*
Bill Goldberg	*17%*
The Rock	*15%*
Tammy Lynn Sytch	*4%*
Chyna	*2%*
The Undertaker	*1%*
Others	*5%*

Keep in mind that our respondents are from within the wrestling industry, which accounts for Vince McMahon's strong finish here. If fans voted, Steve Austin would probably be much higher. Apparently, some insiders have already had their fill of McMahon, which explains why he didn't make it past 37 percent. Tammy Lynn Sytch's struggle with alcohol and drugs, and her failed return to ECW, sparked enough interest in her life story to earn her four percent. The Undertaker received a couple of votes, both from respondents who wondered about the dead man's mysterious private life.

Vince McMahon: book in the works?

8. IF YOU COULD PICK ONE WRESTLER TO HAVE RETIRE, WHOM WOULD IT BE?

Mankind	*34%*
Hulk Hogan	*18%*
Ric Flair	*16%*
Steve Austin	*11%*
Tommy Dreamer	*8%*
Terry Funk	*7%*
The Undertaker	*3%*
Others	*3%*

This question isn't as disrespectful as it sounds. Mankind was the far and away favorite, garnering 34 percent. Almost every bone in his body has been broken, and his brain has been scrambled from thousands of chair shots. There's nothing left for Mick Foley to prove. He will be remembered as one of the all-time greats. Similar sentiments were echoed for Hulk Hogan (some with a tinge of envy) and Ric Flair. Concern over Steve Austin's spinal problems and Tommy Dreamer's injured back prompted votes for those men. Those voting for Terry Funk are probably tired of his endless farewell tours. The Undertaker, who is plagued with nagging aches and pains, would have to suffer a dramatic, career-threatening injury to earn more votes. Let's hope that doesn't happen.

Mankind needs a rest

9. WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST WOMAN?

The beautiful Torrie Wilson

Did Sable's exodus from the sport create a beauty vacuum? Absolutely not! Sable was pretty, with a great body to match, but there are more beautiful women than ever in wrestling. Torrie Wilson grabbed the top spot with a 12 percent lead over the second-highest vote-getter. Obviously, she won with looks alone. When's the last time we heard her talk, anyway? Kimberly maintained her 16 percent slice. Elizabeth leapfrogged Chyna to place third. That's a great compliment to Elizabeth, who is competing against women 10 years younger. WWF women's champion The Kat, formerly known as Miss Kitty and Stacy Carter, earned lots of admirers with her spectacular "showing" at Armageddon. Conspicuous by her absence is Tammy Lynn Sytch. Most are taking a wait-and-see attitude regarding her commitment to wrestling.

Torrie Wilson	*28%*
Kimberly	*16%*
Elizabeth	*12%*
The Kat	*11%*
Chyna	*10%*
Dawn Marie	*8%*
Francine	*7%*
Ivory	*4%*
Terri Runnels	*3%*
Others	*1%*

10. WHO IS THE SEXIEST MALE WRESTLER?

The Rock	*31%*
Chris Jericho	*20%*
Buff Bagwell	*19%*
Edge	*11%*
Test	*5%*
Bret Hart	*4%*
Val Venis	*4%*
Bill Goldberg	*2%*
Sting	*2%*
Others	*2%*

Did the fact that most of our respondents happened to be men affect these standings? Perhaps. The Rock's brimming confidence, defiant chin, and perfect physique propelled him to the top spot. Our much smaller number of female voters helped Chris Jericho reach number two. Most thought Jericho's pouty look is appealing, while most men (and thankfully so!) were turned off by it. Buff Bagwell's position at third wasn't a surprise, considering his sex appeal is such a big part of his persona. Edge placed in the middle of the pack, while the rugged good looks of Bret Hart and Bill Goldberg made decent showings. Evidently, some respondents are suffering from "Venis envy," since Val managed only to tie Hart. Judging Sting for this category required guesswork on the part of some, although enough have seen the "Stinger" without his face paint to earn him two percent of the vote.

11. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST TV COMMENTATOR?

Good ol' J.R.

Jim Ross earned the top spot by an even wider margin than last year. His solid reporting of hold-for-hold ring action and, more significantly, his ability to convey the drama and excitement of live wrestling to the home audience is unparalleled. Joey Styles, who has described his announcing style as a hybrid of Ross and Vince McMahon, jumped 17 points in the Y2K poll. He pumps up a crowd like no other and doesn't come across as espousing the company line (although he does so very subtly). Jerry Lawler placed third solely because of his wild humor. Schiavone-haters were in force again, holding "T-Bone" at eight percent. WCW's failure to give Schiavone compelling material must be considered. Mike Tenay, who earned 30 percent last year, is noticeably absent. His bump from *Nitro* to *Thunder* might have been part of the reason, but his pushover image could put him in Howard Finkel's league before long.

Jim Ross	*34%*
Joey Styles	*23%*
Jerry Lawler	*21%*
Tony Schiavone	*8%*
Michael Cole	*6%*
Bobby Heenan	*5%*
Joel Gertner	*2%*
Others	*1%*

12. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?

Poor	*32%*
Good	*30%*
Mediocre	*28%*
Excellent	*10%*

If the intent of this question were to gauge the amount of mainstream coverage, it might have received a nearly 100 percent "excellent" rating. But the question also refers to the quality of coverage. Wrestlers graced the covers of *Entertainment Weekly*, *TV Guide*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Weekly Standard*, and countless video game magazines. Wrestler biographies and wrestling documentaries aired on A&E and E! cable channels. Some of the coverage was excellent, but too many times, stories were accompanied by snide and condescending tones. Fans continue to be the butt of jokes by journalists who don't understand wrestling. For these reasons, 32 percent of respondents agreed coverage was "poor." However, 30 percent thought it was "good." The sport has come a long way since the WWF and WCW were mentioned interchangeably and one major article referred to "Stone-Cold" Steve Phillips.

13. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON IN WRESTLING?

Wrestling's most influential man

Vince McMahon	*59%*
Vince Russo	*20%*
Paul Heyman	*9%*
Bill Busch	*5%*
Brad Siegel	*3%*
Antonio Inoki	*2%*
Others	*2%*

Vince McMahon's status as the most powerful man in wrestling history may be secure. He jumped five points in the Y2K poll, earning a 39-point lead over his nearest rival, Vince Russo. However, there are several reasons McMahon enjoys such a comfortable margin. Despite his company going public, the real power emanates from one man: Vince McMahon. He controls the WWF with an iron grip. Since Time Warner is the parent company of WCW, there's a delegation of authority in that organization—preventing any one person from gaining too much power. Vince Russo, a former television writer for McMahon, controls WCW in terms of week-to-week storylines and contracted talent. WCW Vice President Bill Busch, Russo's superior, garners only five percent because he delegates much of his authority to Russo and the other Powers-That-Be. That also explains why Brad Siegel, president of Turner Entertainment, earned only two percent.

14. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?

Mediocre	*33%*
Poor	*26%*
Good	*22%*
Excellent	*19%*

The general public's perception of wrestling, according to our respondents, has fallen dramatically since last year. In 1998, 57 percent agreed the general public had a "good" perception, and 38 percent thought the perception was "excellent." Compare that 87 percent (good and excellent combined) with this year's 41 percent. The death of Owen Hart, along with the lawsuits of Rena Mero and Nicole Bass and the comments of the WWF's former advertisers, soured the general public on wrestling as harmless entertainment. Much of the bad press centered on the WWF, but ECW had its share of bad publicity as well. The assault case against New Jack was featured on several tabloid TV programs, and Buh Buh Ray Dudley's tasteless comments about John F. Kennedy Jr.'s fatal plane crash further tarnished the sport's image.

15. WHICH IS THE BEST WEEKLY WRESTLING SHOW ON TV?

Raw	*39%*
Nitro	*26%*
Smackdown	*19%*
ECW On TNN	*12%*
Thunder	*3%*
Others	*1%*

Raw's 13-point margin over *Nitro* was impressive. Even more impressive was the total percentage of votes the WWF received over WCW when *Smackdown* and *Thunder* are added to the mix. In that case, the WWF received 58 percent compared to WCW's 29 percent. *Raw* edged out its network sister program due to several factors. A reason frequently cited is that *Raw* still possesses the cutting edge storylines, with *Smackdown* merely continuing the plot. Some of this is due to the WWF's toning down of *Smackdown* for network TV and also the pay-per-view effect. The fact that *Raw* airs on Mondays encourages viewers to gauge PPV fallout from the previous Sunday. ECW's higher visibility on TNN allowed it to jump seven percentage points this year. *Thunder's* three percent standing might indicate the number of respondents who don't receive TBS. Just kidding.

Big Show with the sport's most prestigious belt

16. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?

WWF World 42%
WCW World 37%
ECW World 21%

The WWF World title surpassed the WCW World title as the most important championship in North America. That is of great historical significance since many view the WCW championship as an unofficial part of the NWA heavyweight title lineage, dating back to 1904. "WCW ruined their own world title," noted one respondent. "How can a championship represent tradition if it's put up in three-way and four-way matches, and even tag team matches?" The fact that Randy Savage pinned Kevin Nash for the WCW title in a tag match last summer didn't help its prestige. The WWF World title's importance can be attributed to the WWF's rise as the number-one wrestling company in North America. Apparently, traditionalists who would have ordinarily voted for the WCW belt chose the ECW title instead. The ECW World champion is the only titleholder who attempts to make regular defenses in Japan.

17. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?

Better 85%
Worse 15%

So much for the good ol' days. To understand the significance of this answer, one must consider the state of wrestling in 1994 and, perhaps, early-1995. Vince McMahon's steroid trial made national headlines. A who's who of pro wrestlers were summoned to testify. The federal government stood poised to send the WWF owner to prison for 17 years. Thanks in part to the testimony of its star witness, Hulk Hogan, McMahon was acquitted. In 1994, Hogan's jump to WCW and his subsequent World title win over Ric Flair signaled that fascinating events would likely take place in the coming years. However, the sport was at a creative low point five years ago, and even nostalgic fans would be hard-pressed to make a case that 1994 was better than 1999. It could be argued that Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair's popularity among the wrestling public was waning considerably, and stars like Steve Austin, The Rock, and Bill Goldberg had yet to make a significant impact (Goldberg and Rock weren't even wrestlers at that point). 1994 was a transitional year and certainly not a better one.

18. ARE GOLDBERG'S BEST DAYS AHEAD OF HIM?

Yes 72%
No 28%

The year 1999 was lackluster for Bill Goldberg. He lost the WCW World title to Kevin Nash at Starrcade '98 when Scott Hall poked him with a taser, Bret Hart used a steel chair on his knee and ankle at Slamboree, then he became entangled in a contract dispute with WCW. Goldberg didn't return in top form until the fall. Incredibly, Goldberg was caught in the mid-card shuffle until Halloween Havoc, when he won the U.S. title from Sid Vicious and appeared to defeat Sting for the World championship. Goldberg was favored to beat Bret Hart for the WCW belt at Starrcade '99. But the Starrcade curse continued as Goldberg came up short a second time. "It can't get much worse for Goldberg," wrote one respondent. "WCW management has done everything to hold him back for a year. They can do that for only so long." Other respondents were skeptical about whether Goldberg could ever top his now-legendary undefeated streak of '98.

Goldberg's best is yet to come

19. WHO IS THE MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?

The Hardy Boyz	*25%*
Mike Awesome	*23%*
Vader	*12%*
The Big Show	*4%*
Little Guido	*3%*
Big Bossman	*3%*
Others	*30%*

Despite capturing the WWF World tag team title in 1999, The Hardy Boyz are usually regarded as the underdogs when they enter the ring. It was true against The Acolytes and The New Age Outlaws. It was even true against Edge and Christian, who have enjoyed relatively little success as a tag team. The Hardys, particularly Jeff, are finally being recognized for their daredevil feats. Mike Awesome won the ECW World title twice this year and is widely regarded as the best in the federation. However, he is tremendously overshadowed by WCW champ Bret Hart and WWF champ The Big Show. That said, he made quite an impact in 1999 despite not being ranked in the *"PWI* 500" earlier in the year. Vader garnered several votes for his two All-Japan Triple Crown victories. Show placed fourth, with those respondents noting that the big man hasn't received enough credit for his strong showing late in the year. Little Guido, despite enormous skills and a honed physique, hasn't escaped mid-card range in ECW. WWF hardcore champion Big Bossman surprised many by returning to main-event status at Armageddon.

20. WHO IS THE MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?

Is Nash overrated?

The most scathing remarks were saved for this category. Perhaps insiders are too close to the action and the personalities involved. But overall, most respondents provided plenty of reasons for their selections. Kevin Nash at number one? "You know how Nash puts people 'into frame' before unloading with his elbows and knees to the midsection?" asked one respondent. "That's indicative of Nash's wrestling style. Get one of his matches on film and you've seen them all." Similar comments were made about Sid Vicious. Mankind made a surprising third-place finish. "It takes guts to absorb all those chair shots, but not a lot of skill," said an insider. "Why should a guy be heralded for all the punishment he takes, anyway?" In other ballots, experts said Chyna received so much attention just because she was a woman, Rob Van Dam's predictable high-flying style wouldn't last outside ECW, and The Rock is all mouth and very few results. That sentiment was echoed in regard to Chris Benoit. In his case, it's *no* mouth and very few results.

Kevin Nash	*21%*
Sid Vicious	*19%*
Mankind	*16%*
Jushin Liger	*8%*
Chyna	*5%*
Rob Van Dam	*5%*
Chris Jericho	*4%*
The Rock	*3%*
Test	*3%*
Chris Benoit	*1%*
Others	*15%*

21. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?

Don't brawl with Meng!

Most of Meng's support came from those closely associated with WCW. Apparently, they believe Meng is the toughest man in sports, not just wrestling. He isn't fancy and has very little charisma, but his hand-to-hand style is very punishing. The Acolytes, who were involved in several barroom brawls recently, were a close second. Rick Steiner, with his tremendous collegiate background, might be better known for his punching power. ECW's hardcore icon, The Sandman, placed fourth. His stint as Hak in WCW actually made some people vote against him. Chris Benoit was noted for his intensity, and his punches, chops, and stomps in particular. Atsushi Onita, whose idea of a foreign object is a grenade, tied with Benoit. Vader and Big Bossman, perennial brawlers, were mentioned because of their unexpected successes in 1999.

Meng	*23%*
The Acolytes	*22%*
Rick Steiner	*11%*
The Sandman	*11%*
Chris Benoit	*7%*
Atsushi Onita	*7%*
Vader	*4%*
Big Bossman	*3%*
Others	*12%*

22. WHO GIVES THE BEST INTERVIEWS?

No other wrestler or entertainer holds an audience's attention like The Rock. He has mastered the art of the dramatic pause and has created an entire catch-phrase "Rock-abulary" of his own. But it isn't like people are waiting with baited breath to hear what he'll say. They already know—and that predictability is part of the magic. Some respondents knocked The Rock for that reason. "He's all delivery but no substance," said one insider. Facial expressions were considered a plus for Vince McMahon, and sincerity and genuine anger were mentioned by many of those voting for Triple-H. Ironically, many respondents noted Steve Austin's humor during his foul-mouthed monologues. The WWF enjoys a considerable edge over WCW in terms of verbal combat.

The Rock	23%
Vince McMahon	21%
Triple-H	17%
Steve Austin	16%
Jeff Jarrett	7%
Dallas Page	6%
Shane Douglas	6%
Chris Jericho	3%

23. WHO IS THE BEST MEXICAN WRESTLER?

An ECW star finally topped a category—and it wasn't for best brawler. In a federation not known for its mid-air ballet, Super Crazy has emerged as one of ECW's premier stars. With the exception of Super Calo, Super Crazy is ECW's only full-time Mexican wrestler. His performances against Yoshihiro Tajiri in their series no doubt made a big impression on our respondents. Injury-prone Rey Misterio Jr. earned 24 percent on pure talent alone. His alliance with The No Limit Soldiers and The Filthy Animals didn't make him more respectable. El Hijo del Santo, who has won almost every title in Mexico, had a successful year with partner and former rival Negro Casas. Juventud Guerrera and Psicosis continued to impress in WCW, while Dr. Wagner Jr. and Rayo de Jalisco Jr. excelled in Mexico and Japan.

Super Crazy	30%
Rey Misterio Jr.	24%
El Hijo del Santo	15%
Juventud Guerrera	14%
Psicosis	4%
Dr. Wagner Jr.	3%
Rayo de Jalisco Jr.	3%
Others	7%

Super Crazy is Mexico's best

24. WHO IS THE BEST JAPANESE WRESTLER?

Mitsuharu Misawa, the five-time All-Japan Triple Crown champion, is usually called the Hulk Hogan or Bruno Sammartino of Japanese wrestling. At one point in 1999, Misawa held three championships simultaneously. Keiji Muto, the top star of New Japan, gained less than half of Misawa's vote. IWGP junior heavyweight champion Jushin Liger defended his belt many times in New Japan, then lost and regained the belt during a swing through WCW. Naoya Ogawa brought international respectability to the NWA championship again by defending in Japan and the United States. H (formerly known as Hayabusa) and Masa Chono enjoyed successful, but not spectacular years. The comeback of 50-year-old Genichiro Tenryu garnered headlines in Japan. Masato Tanaka's ECW World title victory over Mike Awesome on December 17 occurred after voting concluded.

Mitsuharu Misawa	54%
Keiji Muto	21%
Jushin Liger	7%
Naoya Ogawa	7%
H	3%
Masa Chono	3%
Genichiro Tenryu	2%
Masato Tanaka	1%
Others	2%

25. WHO IS THE MOST DANGEROUS WRESTLER?

Bill Goldberg held steady with about the same percentage as last year. His percentage doubled that of Meng, who placed second. New Jack was cited for his indiscriminate use of weapons. Steve Williams, who sent Juventud Guerrera and Silver King to the hospital in a recent three-minute thrashing, tied with New Jack. The Acolytes were particularly dangerous to bar-hopping rednecks in 1999. Vader rejuvenated his career by returning to All-Japan, and Big Bossman rejuvenated his career by getting plain mean. Triple-H, in his ruthless pursuit of the WWF title, was willing to injure one individual after another to get what he wanted. Naoya Ogawa displayed his technical skills in the NWA and showed his rougher side in Japan's UFO.

Bill Goldberg	*33%*
Meng	*16%*
New Jack	*12%*
Steve Williams	*12%*
The Acolytes	*11%*
Vader	*3%*
Big Bossman	*2%*
Triple-H	*2%*
Naoya Ogawa	*2%*
Others	*7%*

Run! Jump! Hide! Here comes Goldberg!

26. WHO IS WRESTLING'S MOST PROMISING NEW STAR?

Rhino	*25%*
The Hardy Boyz	*24%*
Torrie Wilson	*9%*
Test	*8%*
Lash LeRoux	*7%*
Kurt Angle	*6%*
Evan Karagias	*5%*
Danny Doring	*1%*
Others	*15%*

Rhino's stock is rising

Rhino doesn't give entertaining interviews and doesn't possess an Atlas physique. He is, as Steve Corino puts it, a "rookie monster." Okay, he's not really a rookie, but he is quite a monster. At 6'1", 289 pounds, Rhino has a low center of gravity and combines brawling with power moves. His spear rivals Goldberg's. He interrupted a recent match between The Sandman and Justin Credible, knocking the breath out of both hardcore icons before leaving the ring. The Hardy Boyz aren't new competitors, but one could argue they are new stars. Their brief WWF World tag team title reign might just be an appetizer. A pretty face (and body!) were enough for Torrie Wilson to earn nine percent, although she hasn't made a definitive impact in WCW. Test, the jilted fiance of Stephanie McMahon, also has a bright future—if he can keep his nose on his face.

27. SHOULD THE WWF HAVE HAVE CONTINUED THE PPV AFTER THE OWEN HART TRAGEDY?

Yes	*74%*
No	*26%*

Following the death of Owen Hart at Over the Edge on May 23, many of those in attendance at Kansas City's Kemper Arena were angry that Vince McMahon had allowed the pay-per-view to continue. The home audience was informed that Owen had died before the PPV's conclusion, but the arena crowd was not told of his status. The mainstream media focused more on the moral issue of the WWF's decision to continue than it did on the issue of workplace safety. "Ending the show and returning the arena crowd's money is one thing, but refunding the home viewers would have been a nightmare," said one respondent. "In hindsight, Vince McMahon and the WWF were correct in gritting their teeth and continuing."

28. AT PRESS TIME, WWF STOCK WAS SELLING AT 14 1/2. WHERE DO YOU SEE WWFE STOCK A YEAR FROM NOW?

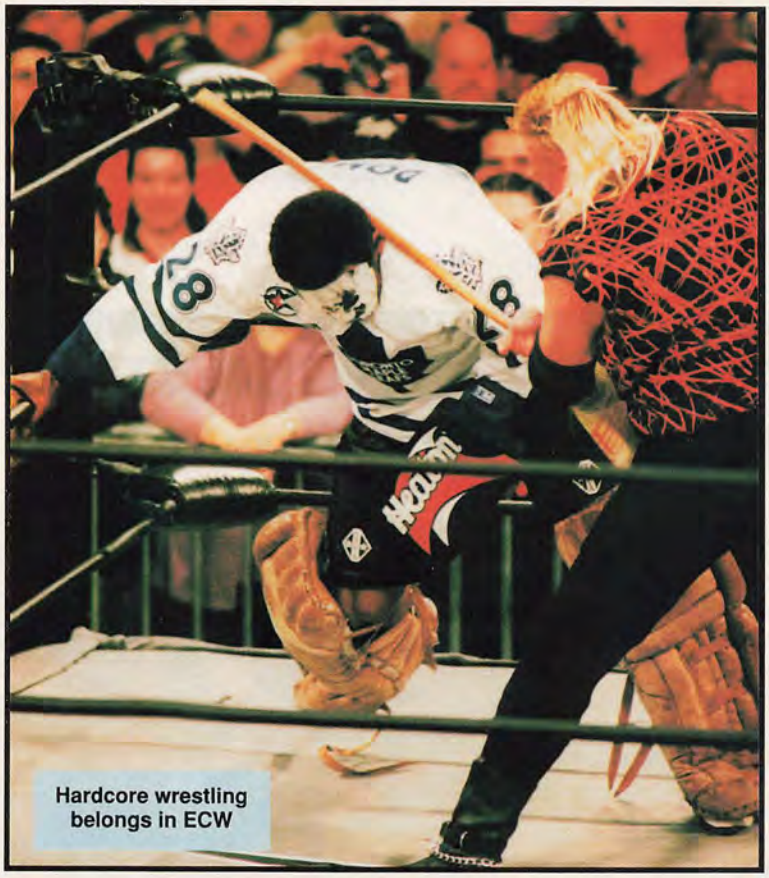
About the same	*35%*
Double	*24%*
Half what it is now	*22%*
Less than half	*11%*
Triple	*4%*

Most respondents expressed concern about Steve Austin's career-threatening spinal injury and speculated on how that would affect WWFE stock. And most anticipated a rollercoaster ride with the stock, with 35 percent believing it would be selling at about the same price a year from now. Twenty-four percent were bullish concerning the WWF, trusting Vince McMahon to come up with a winning strategy with or without Austin. Others cited the letter-writing campaign of the Parents Television Council and the subsequent advertiser exodus as signs of future trouble. Relatively few respondents thought the WWFE stock price would fall less than half, but even fewer believed shares would triple in value.

29. SHOULD HARDCORE WRESTLING BE OUTLAWED?

Depending on the participants, hardcore matches can be exciting or a waste of time. A few respondents suggested that only ECW should sanction hardcore matches in the U.S. because only its wrestlers are capable of making it more than a sideshow. Most respondents believe hardcore wrestling adds another dimension to the sport, much like cruiserweight action or brass knuckles contests from years gone by. Others said hardcore bouts create unnecessary risks for wrestlers, who are often injured by errant chairs or tables. Dave "Fit" Finlay suffered from a severed nerve when Brian Knobs sent him flying into a table last year. Skeptics charge that hardcore matches merely allow promotions to utilize wrestlers who are not able to succeed in the regulation ranks.

No	*58%*
Yes	*42%*



Hardcore wrestling belongs in ECW

30. WILL WE EVER SEE A WRESTLERS' UNION?

No	*52%*
Yes	*44%*
Not sure	*4%*

There's been talk of forming a wrestlers' union for decades, but those rumblings have intensified since the extinction of the sport's territorial system in the 1980s. Since high paydays in the U.S. can only be found in the WWF, WCW, and ECW at this time, most wrestlers don't have much of a voice in reference to schedules, health insurance, or career directions. Their only power lies in their contracts, but only elite stars have enough leverage to make them truly beneficial. According to one respondent, "The big stars in this business are taken care of financially—or 'paid off' might be a better term. There's no chance of a union forming unless the major players are involved." In fact, insiders laughed when Vince McMahon formed a union of wrestlers to battle The Corporate Ministry last year. That turned out to be a ruse to dupe Steve Austin. We should have known Vinnie Mac's heart wasn't in a union.

31. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR ECW TO BE ON PAR WITH WCW AND THE WWF?

3 to 5 years	*27%*
1 to 3 years	*25%*
Never	*21%*
5 to 10 years	*17%*
There now	*10%*

Astoundingly, 79 percent of respondents think ECW is already on par or will eventually catch up to WCW and the WWF. The highest number of respondents, 27 percent, anticipate it will take three to five years before this becomes a reality. Twenty-five percent believe it will take even less time. Other respondents, 21 percent, don't believe ECW will ever be as powerful as the Big Two—despite the fact *PWI* awarded the federation world title status last year. Seventeen percent believe it will take five to 10 years, while a hardcore group of enthusiasts insists the quality of ECW action—and the depth of its personalities and storylines—already put it on par.

ECW hasn't arrived yet

32. SHOULD ECW CHANGE NIGHTS ON TNN?

Yes	*68%*
No	*32%*

The "Friday Night Thrill Zone" is highly touted by The Nashville Network. In fact, one reason TNN executives approved ECW programming was to boost the ratings of *Motor Madness* (which precedes ECW) and *Rollerjam* (which follows ECW). "The whole 'Thrill Zone' concept is directed toward an active audience," explained one respondent. "Many of the people interested in monster truck rallies, wrestling, and roller derby aren't going to be home Friday nights. Tuesday, the only non-wrestling night on cable, would be their best bet." A few others indicated that ECW should expand to two hours as soon as it has the roster depth.

33. WHO DO YOU THINK WILL BE NUMBER ONE IN NEXT YEAR'S *"PWI* 500"?

Bill Goldberg	*26%*
The Rock	*22%*
Chris Benoit	*20%*
Rob Van Dam	*15%*
Bret Hart	*5%*
Vader	*3%*
Triple-H	*3%*
Others	*6%*

Most respondents believe it's only a matter of time before Goldberg clinches the number-one spot. He placed second in the 1998 "500" and was ranked ninth in '99. According to some, the fact that he has been denied the past two years makes it more likely he'll gain the top position in 2000. However, others see The Rock as Steve Austin's heir apparent in the WWF. If Rock captures the World title of the sport's hottest federation, he could be propelled to number one. Chris Benoit placed third at 20 percent. "*PWI* has been on a Chris Benoit kick this year, and I think it's going to backfire," said an irritated respondent. "Rob Van Dam has been ECW TV champion for 20 months. He was number two in '99. Why shouldn't he be number one in 2000?"

Early favorite for top spot

34. HAS WCW MADE A SMART MOVE BY CHANGING ITS MONDAY NIGHT TIME SLOT?

No *52%*
Yes *48%*

Starting in January, *Nitro* eliminated its third hour by airing from 8 to 10 p.m. Eastern time. Creative head Vince Russo wanted it to air from 9 to 11 p.m. The upside is that *Nitro's* first hour still runs unopposed, and WCW no longer has to dilute its product by spreading it over three hours. Russo wanted the later time slot so he could move forward on more risque storylines that could rival some of *Raw's*. The consensus among those voting "no" was that *Raw's* ratings would be astronomical with no opposition from 10 to 11 p.m.

35. WILL THE WWF'S LOSS OF ADVERTISERS HAVE A GOOD LONG-TERM EFFECT ON WRESTLING IN GENERAL?

No *56%*
Yes *44%*

Coca-Cola, AT&T, Mars, the Coast Guard, and the Army were among those that pulled their ads from WWF programs and publications in November. Concerned about the advertiser exodus, the WWF agreed to tone down its product. The result has been less tawdry, yet still compelling storylines. In other words, more soap opera and a little less raunch. Optimists suggest this will salvage wrestling's bawdy image among the general public and encourage a creative renaissance. Others say wrestling's image has been irreparably damaged by the WWF and others.

Advertisiers aren't fans of The Godfather

36. IS IT WRONG TO HAVE MEN vs. WOMEN MATCHES?

No *53%*
Yes *47%*

Almost every respondent voting in favor of male vs. female contests cited Chyna as a positive example. "Chyna has revolutionized wrestling by proving she can compete against men without getting hurt," said one insider. "Although Chris Jericho is the Intercontinental champion, Chyna must be considered the favorite in their rematches." Another respondent said Chyna was the exception, not the rule. "For every Chyna who can defend herself in the ring, there's going to be a Fabulous Moolah, Mae Young, Torrie Wilson, Kimberly, and Elizabeth carted to the hospital."

Mixed matches can be good

37. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT THE MONDAY RATINGS GAP TO BE A YEAR FROM NOW?

The most notorious poll question ever asked was in our 1998 edition: "Can the WWF reclaim its spot as the number-one federation in North America?" Amazingly, 53 percent of our experts said "no" only two years ago. The WWF's great comeback has convinced most observers that wrestling is cyclical by nature. Those being beaten today will figure out a winning strategy tomorrow or the next day. Even now, some believe the WWF is growing stale, which may reignite interest in WCW.

Significantly smaller *40%*
Slightly smaller *28%*
Slightly larger *24%*
Significantly larger *8%*

38. WHICH WAS THE BEST WWF PAY-PER-VIEW OF 1999?

WrestleMania XV	53%
St. Valentine's Day Massacre	16%
SummerSlam	11%
Royal Rumble	5%
Backlash	3%
Others	12%

Steve Austin's WWF World title victory over The Rock at WrestleMania XV helped that pay-per-view place first. The WWF's biggest show does particularly well in the *"PWI* Poll" because each PPV builds toward the next event, with the culmination at WrestleMania. Vince McMahon's losing effort against Steve Austin in a steel cage made the St. Valentine's Day Massacre memorable. The other solid finishers were SummerSlam (Jesse Ventura appeared as special referee), the Royal Rumble (McMahon won the 30-person Rumble), and Backlash (the Austin-Rock rematch).

Austin targets The Rock at WrestleMania XV

39. WHICH WAS THE BEST WCW PAY-PER-VIEW OF 1999?

Halloween Havoc created the most intrigue because it marked the transition from the Eric Bischoff era to the Powers-That-Be era. The old rivalries and storylines that had become stale were given a unique twist at this PPV. Hulk Hogan laying down for Sting and Bill Goldberg holding the WCW World and U.S. belts aloft (although he was forced to return the World belt the next night) signaled a new approach. The World title tournament conclusion at Mayhem—featuring Hart vs. Sting, Benoit vs. Jarrett, and Hart vs. Benoit—made that PPV a strong number two.

Halloween Havoc	33%
Mayhem	30%
Great American Bash	19%
Starrcade	7%
Others	11%

40. WHICH WAS THE BEST ECW PAY-PER-VIEW OF 1999?

ECW has yet to distinguish any of its pay-per-views as its supercard of the year. The top PPV, according to our respondents, was Anarchy Rulz in September. Mike Awesome defeated Taz for the World title in a three-way match that included Masato Tanaka. Living Dangerously was noted for two matches: ECW champ Taz' win over Sabu and TV champ Rob Van Dam's defeat of Jerry Lynn in overtime. At Hardcore Heaven, Taz defended the title against Chris Candido and Buh Buh Ray Dudley in separate bouts. Guilty as Charged, which featured Taz' ECW title victory over Shane Douglas, was also significant.

Anarchy Rulz	35%
Living Dangerously	30%
Hardcore Heaven	19%
Guilty as Charged	10%
November to Remember	4%
HeatWave	2%

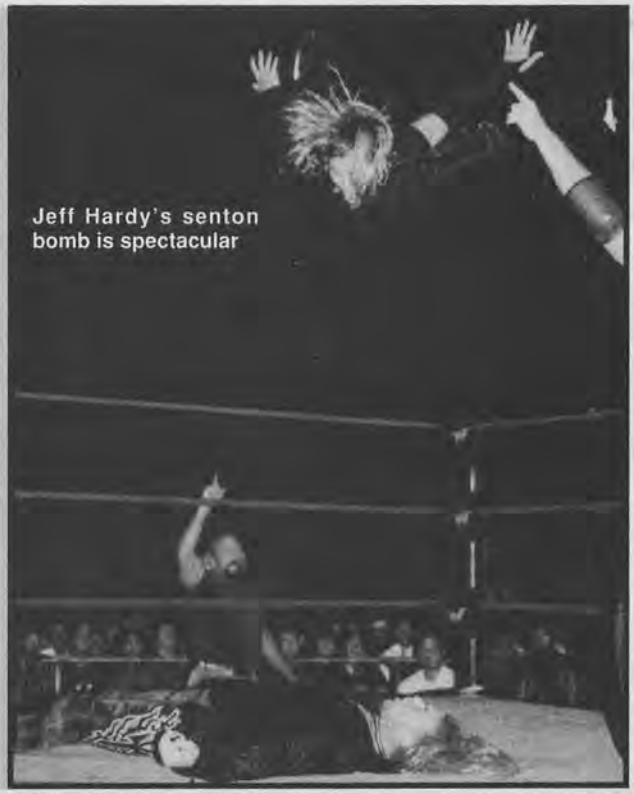
FINISHING IT OFF: THE BEST OF THE BEST

This is our sixth "Best Of The Best" poll, a comprehensive study of wrestling's most awesome, dangerous, and effective finishing holds/maneuvers and the men who use them.

41. WHICH IS THE BEST TOP-ROPE MANEUVER?

Although WWF announcers might call it a bomb, Jeff Hardy's most breathtaking move is really just a flipping senton. Unlike a traditional flipping senton, Hardy opens his body into the fan form, rather than the somersault form, to increase hang time. Jeff Hardy has become so proficient at it that his version has even surpassed the original, which was invented by The Great Sasuke. Strong support remains for Kidman's shooting star press, which continues to win him matches and titles. Rob Van Dam scored high marks in this category last year for his split-legged moonsault, but that has been eclipsed by his frog splash, which has proven more effective. Mike Awesome's power bomb from the top rope is every bit as effective as any flying move.

Jeff Hardy's flipping senton 22%
Billy Kidman's shooting star press 17%
Rob Van Dam's five-star frog splash 16%
Mike Awesome's Awesome bomb 12%
Eddy Guerrero's frog splash 10%
Others 23%



Jeff Hardy's senton bomb is spectacular

42. WHAT IS THE BEST HURACANRANA VARIATION?

Dragon Kid's Dragonrana 23%
Rey Misterio Jr.'s springboard huracanrana 19%
Dragon Kid's blind huracanrana 15%
Super Delfin's Delfinlana 14%
Mike Quackenbush's backward huracanrana 8%
Others 21%

The past year has seen even more incredible variations on this stunning high-flying move. Despite his knee injuries, which have slowed him considerably, Rey Misterio Jr. stays strong with his springboard version of the huracanrana. Mild support for both Super Delfin's spinning Delfinlana and Mike Quackenbush's backward variation, executed from the top turnbuckle. The runaway winner this year, though, has been Toryumon star and Ultimo Dragon protege Dragon Kid. Capturing two spots on the list for two separate huracanrana variations makes him a high-flying force. While he is credited with inventing at least four variations, his Dragonrana topped the list. It's a 450 splash turned into a huracanrana. It must be seen to be believed. Surprisingly, many of our respondents have seen it.

43. WHICH IS THE BEST POWER BOMB VARIATION?

Mike Awesome's Awesome bomb 26%
Jushin Liger's running Liger bomb 21%
Sid Vicious' power bomb 15%
Kevin Nash's power bomb 13%
Vader's high angle power bomb 7%
Others 18%

Our insiders think the name couldn't be more fitting—Mike Awesome's Awesome bomb is just that. Although the top-rope power bomb was invented by Chris Benoit and made popular by Chris Candido, Mike Awesome's version is turning heads like no other. The running Liger bomb is used more and more, not only by the Japanese star for whom it is named, but by the likes of D-Lo Brown and Lenny Lane as well. "It's the perfect blend of agility and strength," commented one respondent. Both Kevin Nash and Sid Vicious received strong backing for their bombs, with Vicious' receiving the slight edge. Two-time All-Japan Triple Crown champion Vader gains recognition for his variation.

44. WHICH IS THE BEST PILEDRIVER VARIATION?

As The Undertaker continues to lose steam in a category he dominated for years, his half-brother, Kane, continues to build momentum. ECW star Jerry Lynn received strong support for his cradle piledriver, which has won him a lot of key matches over the last year. The Michinoku driver II, used by both Taka and Juventud Guerrera (he calls his the Juvi driver) as a finisher, split our insiders. Wrote one of them: "Taka's version of the move may be prettier, but he hasn't won a fraction of the matches Juvi has in the last 12 months." Another said the following: "The innovator is still the best. Taka Michinoku's is the superior version."

Kane's tombstone piledriver..... 25%
Jerry Lynn's cradle piledriver..... 18%
Juventud Guerrera's Juvi driver..... 17%
Taka Michinoku's Michinoku driver 15%
Undertaker's tombstone piledriver 8%
Others..... 17%

45. WHICH IS THE BEST SUPLEX VARIATION?

Mitsuharu Misawa's release tiger suplex..... 21%
The Rock's Rock bottom..... 20%
Chris Benoit's rolling German suplex 19%
Jun Akiyama's exploder '98 suplex 14%
Curt Hennig's fisherman suplex..... 10%
Others..... 16%

It may not look like a suplex, but the Rock bottom is simply a uranage suplex without the half-twist, which qualifies it for consideration in this category. Our insiders still favored the winning ways of Mitsuharu Misawa, though, who's crushing release tiger suplex won by a small margin. Another star of All-Japan, Jun Akiyama, has several suplexes in his arsenal, but his latest invention, the exploder '98, grabbed the attention of our experts. "I seriously doubt," said one insider, "that anyone will ever kick out of the exploder '98." Curt Hennig's fisherman suplex can't be ignored. It's been Hennig's hallmark for 15 years. Chris Benoit also scored highly for his rolling German suplex. It allows him to drop opponents on their heads two or three times in a row!

46. WHO HAS THE MOST EFFECTIVE MARTIAL ARTS KICKS?

Hayyy-yahhh! says Rob Van Dam

Rob Van Dam..... 24%
X-Pac..... 21%
Yoshihiro Tajiri..... 18%
Jerry Flynn..... 14%
Toshiaki Kawada..... 11%
Steve Blackman..... 7%
Others..... 5%

With athletes from other disciplines flocking to pro wrestling, this category was an inevitability. X-Pac has displayed tremendous kicks throughout his career, but relies on them more heavily now than he did during his days as The 1-2-3 Kid. Still, with a last name like Van Dam, it'd be tough to ignore ECW's TV champ. The pinpoint accuracy with which he delivers his combination of kicks brought him top honors. Wrote one respondent: "Though his win-loss record is no indicator, Jerry Flynn possesses the most lethal kicks in the business." Japanese wrestlers Toshiaki Kawada (famed for his jumping high kick) and Yoshihiro Tajiri (famed for his buzzsaw kicks) made an impact in this category, with Tajiri winning a larger percentage of the votes.

47. WHAT IS THE HIGHEST IMPACT MANEUVER?

This year's biggest margin of victory in the "Best Of The Best" goes to Bill Goldberg, who has annihilated opponents both in the polls and in the ring with his brutal spear. No other move even came close. "The spear is plain, unbridled force," wrote one of our experts. WWF champion Triple-H received support for his pet move, the pedigree, the next closest runner-up. In terms of raw impact, Chris Benoit's chops have left their mark—on the chests of many unfortunate WCW wrestlers. Steve Williams ultra-dangerous backdrop driver has laid out competitors in the WWF, WCW, and All-Japan. A choke-slam is one thing, but Akira Taue executes his standing on the ring apron, and throws his opponents to the arena floor. That helped him grab a spot on the list.

Goldberg's spear..... 32%
Hunter Hearst Helmsley's pedigree... 16%
Chris Benoit's knife-edge chops 15%
Steve Williams' backdrop driver 11%
Akira Taue's choke-slam to the floor .. 9%
Others..... 17%

48. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE SUBMISSION HOLD?

The scorpion deathlock stings

Scorpion deathlock/sharpshooter	*28%*
Mandible claw	*18%*
Figure-four leglock	*16%*
Walls of Jericho	*9%*
Crippler crossface	*8%*
Tarantula hold	*7%*
Others	*14%*

The scorpion deathlock is the premiere submission hold in the world, according to our panel of experts. It's not hard to see why. Bret Hart, Sting, Dr. Wagner Jr., Akira Taue, and a host of other world-class athletes use it. Only one man uses the mandible claw, and Mankind's signature hold received strong support nonetheless. The figure-four leglock is still Keiji Muto's favorite hold; his long IWGP heavyweight title reign helped reaffirm this classic submission hold's status. Chris Jericho's torturer crab hold (Walls of Jericho) is still highly effective, no matter what he's calling it this week. Chris Benoit's star is on the rise, and so is his trademark submission, the Crippler crossface. Tajiri's exotic tarantula hold got a surprising number of votes even though the move itself has never won a match.

49. WHICH IS THE RISKIEST MANEUVER?

Spaceman plancha into shooting star press	*20%*
Space flying tiger drop	*18%*
Twisting plancha	*15%*
Star dust press	*13%*
Cancun tornado moonsault	*8%*
Others	*26%*

Without caution or care, Doc Chan will run toward the ropes, jump directly to the top without the use of his hands, then fly out of the ring to the floor, while twisting into a shooting star press. One mistimed movement or slip in concentration would put him in a wheelchair—or a pine box. That's about as high-risk as you can get. That's how the spaceman plancha turned shooting star press managed to edge out the space flying tiger drop in this category. While almost suicidal, it is not quite as dangerous as this year's winner. The twisting plancha, or Hayashi moonsault, is about as risky as dives get. Hayabusa's invention, the star dust press, still warrants merit in this category, as does the rarely used Cancun tornado moonsault.

There's no counter for Goldberg's jackhammer

50. WHO POSSESSES THE MOST EFFECTIVE FINISHER?

Goldberg (jackhammer)	*19%*
Steve Austin ("Stone-Cold" stunner)	*17%*
Rob Van Dam (five-star frog splash)	*14%*
Hunter Hearst Helmsley (pedigree)	*13%*
Mitsuharu Misawa (emerald erosion)	*12%*
Sting (scorpion deathlock)	*10%*
Others	*15%*

"Nobody escapes from the jackhammer. The referees just count to three as a formality. No one's going to get up from it." That was the opinion of one insider, but it was an opinion we heard echoed by a large number of our panelists. Not far behind is Steve Austin's version of the Ace crusher, the "Stone-Cold" stunner. Only a small number of votes separated the sport's top finishing moves. ECW sensation Rob Van Dam made waves in more than one category with his frog splash. The remaining top slots went to the finishers of the WWF's Helmsley and his pedigree, WCW's Sting with his scorpion deathlock, and All-Japan's Misawa for his emerald erosion. Though they vary in form, they all bring the same result—victory.

THINK YOU'RE TOUGH?

Prove it, punk!

1) Create an imaginary wrestler using the coupon below or print the information on a piece of paper.

2) Send it with $1 for each opponent to: **IWA CHALLENGE**
BOX 5275
WILLOWICK, OH 44095

3) See if your wrestler wins a *CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING BELT* in the IWA's exclusive "Rookie Brawl."

4) Compete against your friends for as little as $3 a month and win great prizes like engraved plaques, championship belts and lots more!

This is not a computer game or on-line game. After you prove yourself against these ten guys, you'll face wrestlers created by IWA players from all over the world!

WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. Airplane spin
2. Armbar
3. Armdrag
4. Armlock
5. Arm stretch
6. Arm whip
7. Asian spike
8. Bear hug
9. Biting
10. Body slam
11. Body tackle
12. Chicken wing
13. Choke
14. Claw
15. Clothesline
16. Cross body block
17. Double axehandle
18. Drop kick
19. Eagle split
20. Elbow smash
21. Eye gouge
22. Face rake
23. Fireman's carry ram
24. Flying body press
25. Flying clothesline
26. Flying drop kick
27. Flying elbow drop
28. Flying head butt
29. Flying mare
30. Forearm smash
31. Foreign object
32. Full nelson
33. Giant swing
34. Grapevine
35. Hair pulling
36. Hammerlock
37. Head lock
38. Head stomp
39. Heart punch
40. Hip roll
41. Irish whip
42. Knee drop
43. Leglock
44. Manager interference
45. Monkey flip
46. Overhead toss
47. Pole ram
48. Reverse chinlock
49. Rolling scissors
50. Rope burn
51. Savate kick
52. Scissors grip
53. Shoulder breaker
54. Slingshot
55. Snap mare
56. Step-over toe hold
57. Suplex
58. Surfboard
59. Turnbuckle smash
60. Wristlock

SET-UP HOLDS

61. Abdominal stretch
62. Atomic drop
63. Avalanche
64. Backbreaker
65. Backroll press
66. Belly to belly
67. Big splash
68. Boston crab
69. Brain buster
70. Bulldog
71. Camel clutch
72. Cobra clutch
73. Cradle
74. Crucifix
75. DDT
76. Figure four
77. Flying leg drop
78. Gourd buster
79. Indian death lock
80. Neckbreaker
81. Piledriver
82. Power bomb
83. Power slam
84. Russian sickle
85. Sleeper
86. Slingshot suplex
87. Small package
88. Spine buster
89. Sunset flip
90. Superplex

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WWW.IWACHAT.COM

☐ *1. Big Ben*

☐ *2. Ace Stevens*

☐ *3. Jaeger van Dorn*

☐ *4. Bodybag Jones*

☐ *5. Wildfire Johnny Rage*

☐ *6. Eric Darkstrom*

☐ *7. Nook the Secret Weapon*

☐ *8. Derek Craven*

☐ *9. El Diablo Sanchez*

☐ *10. Tygar Singh*

YOUR NAME (PRINT NEATLY)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

WRESTLER'S NAME (DO NOT USE ANY REAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES)

Wear-Down Holds: Choose 10 of the holds at the left numbered 1-60. Only use a hold once.

1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____

6_____ 7_____ 8_____ 9_____ 10_____

Set-Up Holds: Choose 5 of the holds at the left numbered 61-90. Only use a hold once.

1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____

Finishing Hold: Create your own custom final maneuver or choose a hold from our list.

_____

Opponents: Check the box below each wrestler you wish to challenge.

PWI POLL: 1993

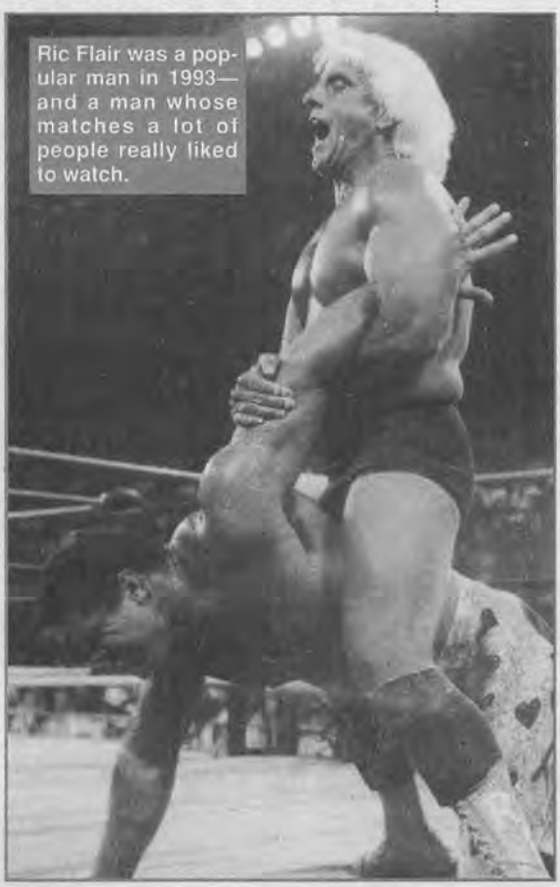
1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Jushin Liger 32%
- Bret Hart 8%
- Jeff Jarrett 12%
- Curt Hennig 9%
- Ric Flair 8%
- Others 21%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Ric Flair 27%
- Jushin Liger 9%
- Hulk Hogan 7%
- Lou Thesz 6%
- Bruno Sammartino 5%
- Sting 5%
- Bret Hart 4%
- The Great Muta 3%
- Buddy Rogers 3%
- Others 31%

3. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Rick & Scott Steiner 21%
- The Legion of Doom 20%
- The Heavenly Bodies 11%
- The Freebirds 10%
- The British Bulldogs 4%
- The Hart Foundation 3%
- The Rockers 3%
- Rock 'n' Roll Express 3%
- Ole & Gene Anderson 3%
- Others 22%

4. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 68%
- WWF 28%
- Others 4%

5. WHICH IS THE DOMINANT FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WWF 83%
- WCW 6%
- None 11%



Ric Flair was a popular man in 1993—and a man whose matches a lot of people really liked to watch.

6. WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN BIG VAN VADER AND HULK HOGAN?
- Big Van Vader 53%
- Hulk Hogan 47%

7. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN STING AND BRET HART?
- Hart 51%
- Sting 49%

8. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE OF WRESTLING AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Cloudy 25%
- Status Quo 32%
- Promising 35%
- Shining 5%
- Hopeless 3%

9. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANAGER?
- Jim Cornette 60%
- Jimmy Hart 25%
- Bobby Heenan 7%
- Mr. Fuji 3%
- Others 5%

10. IF YOU COULD WATCH A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH AT ANY VENUE, WHERE WOULD IT BE?
- Madison Square Garden 69%
- The Tokyo Dome 9%
- Baltimore Arena 8%
- The Omni 5%
- Kiel Auditorium 4%
- Others 5%

11. WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR?
- Jim Ross 33%
- Jesse Ventura 29%
- Tony Schiavone 27%
- Bobby Heenan 2%
- Gorilla Monsoon 2%
- Others 7%

12. SHOULD WRESTLING HAVE A MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE?
- Yes 12%
- No 88%

13. SHOULD ALL TITLES CHANGES HANDS ON DISQUALIFICATIONS AND COUNTOUTS?
- Yes 76%
- No 24%

14. DO YOU THINK STEROID USE IS STILL PREVALENT IN WRESTLING?
- Yes 41%
- No 59%

15. WILL RIC FLAIR WIN HIS 10TH WORLD TITLE?
- Yes 38%
- No 62%

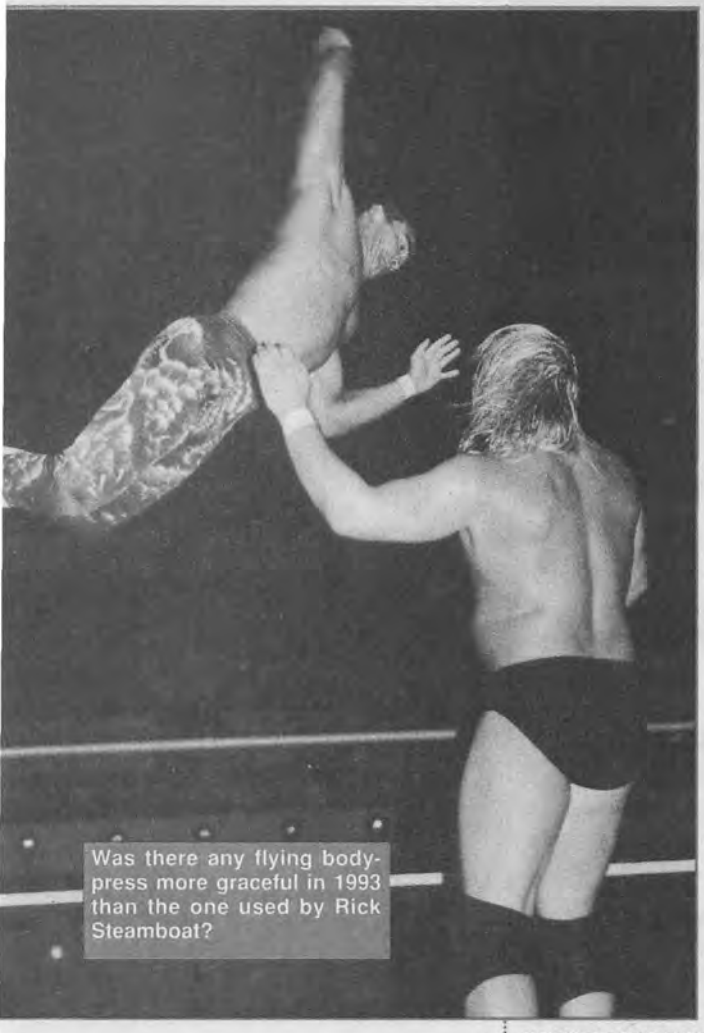
16. IS PAY-PER-VIEW GOOD FOR WRESTLING?
- Yes 77%
- No 23%

17. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 92%
- Mediocre 6%
- Good 2%
- Excellent 0%

18. ARE THE BEST OF TODAY'S WRESTLERS AS GOOD AS THE BEST OF THOSE 40 YEARS AGO?
- Yes 66%
- No 34%

19. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 44%
- Mediocre 33%
- Good 22%
- Excellent 1%

20. WHO IS THE BEST REFEREE IN WRESTLING?
- Dave Hebner 53%
- Nick Patrick 35%
- Dick Kroll 8%
- Others 4%



Was there any flying body-press more graceful in 1993 than the one used by Rick Steamboat?

21. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?
Vince McMahon 83%
Hulk Hogan 7%
Ted Turner 7%
Others 3%

***22. WHO HAS THE BEST BOSTON CRAB?**
Rick Martel
Stan Hansen
Jim Neidhart
Skinner
Sgt. Slaughter

23. WHO HAS THE BEST CLAWHOLD?
Kevin Von Erich
Blackjack Mulligan
Barry Windham
Baron Von Raschke
El Gigante

24. WHO HAS THE BEST CLOTHESLINE?
Rick Steiner
Stan Hansen
Bret Hart
Hawk
Beau Beverly

25. WHO HAS THE BEST DDT?
Jim Garvin
Jake Roberts
Michael Hayes
Dr. Tom Prichard
John Tatum

26. WHO HAS THE BEST DROPKICK?
Brian Pillman
Jeff Jarrett
Shawn Michaels
Chris Walker
Jim Brunzell

27. WHO HAS THE BEST ELBOWSMASH?
Randy Savage
Dustin Rhodes
Jerry Sags
Abdullah the Butcher
Austin Idol

28. WHO HAS THE BEST FIGURE-FOUR LEGLOCK?
Ric Flair
Sting
Greg Valentine
Eddie Gilbert
Ted DiBiase

29. WHO HAS THE BEST FLYING BODY-PRESS?
Rick Steamboat
Brian Pillman
The Patriot
Tom Zenk
Steve Ray

30. WHO HAS THE BEST FLYING FISTDROP?
Jerry Lawler
Marty Jannetty
Shawn Michaels
The Honky Tonk Man
Randy Savage

31. WHO HAS THE BEST FULL-NELSON?
Billy Jack Haynes
The Warlord
Ken Patera
Sid Justice
Bill Kazmaier

32. WHO HAS THE BEST LEGDROP?
Bobby Eaton
Hulk Hogan
Sid Justice
The Patriot
Terry Gordy

33. WHO HAS THE BEST MOONSAULT?
Jushin Liger
The Great Muta
Rob Zakowski
Lightning Kid
Ranger Ross

34. WHO HAS THE BEST PILEDRIVER?
The Undertaker
Terry Funk
Jerry Lawler
Eric Embry
Don Muraco

35. WHO HAS THE BEST POWERSLAM?
Steve Williams
Ron Simmons
Animal
Davey Boy Smith
Bam Bam Bigelow

36. WHO HAS THE BEST SAVATE KICK?
Stan Lane
John Tatum
Chris Adams
Bad New Brown
The Great Muta

37. WHO HAS THE BEST SCORPION DEATHLOCK?
Bret Hart
Sting
Riki Choshu
Terrence Taylor
Ron Garvin

38. WHO HAS THE BEST SLEEPERHOLD?
Ted DiBiase
Sgt. Slaughter
Tom Zenk
Virgil
Mark Youngblood

39. WHO HAS THE BEST SUNSET FLIP?
Tom Zenk
Mike Graham
Tito Santana
Terrence Taylor
Koko B. Ware

40. WHO HAS THE BEST VERTICAL SUPLEX?
Owen Hart
Davey Boy Smith
Lex Luger
Paul Orndorff
Dick Murdoch

41. WHO HAS THE BEST OVERALL FINISHER?
Scott Steiner (Frankensteiner)
Jushin Liger (moonsault)
Steve Williams (Oklahoma stampede)
Sting (Stinger splash)
Ric Flair (figure-four)

*(Numbers 22-41 were selected by the editors, and printed in *PWI*/July 1992)

PWI POLL: 1994

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Jushin Liger 27%
- The Kid 24%
- Ric Flair 15%
- Bret Hart 14%
- Others 20%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Ric Flair 55%
- Lou Thesz 7%
- Buddy Rogers 6%
- Andre the Giant 5%
- Sting 4%
- Rick Rude 4%
- Others 19%

3. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- The Legion of Doom 29%
- The Midnight Express 18%
- 2 Cold Scorpio & Marcus Bagwell 15%
- The Heavenly Bodies 11%
- Rick & Scott Steiner 7%
- The Freebirds 5%
- The British Bulldogs 4%
- The Hart Foundation 3%
- Others 8%

4. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN YOKOZUNA AND BIG VAN VADER?
- Big Van Vader 91%
- Yokozuna 9%

5. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN RICK AND SCOTT STEINER
- Scott Steiner 57%
- Rick Steiner 43%

6. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST-QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 72%
- WWF 26%
- Others 2%

7. WHICH IS THE DOMINANT FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WWF 68%
- WCW 9%
- None 23%

Four years before he was elected governor of Minnesota, Jesse Ventura was receiving high praise for his work as a broadcaster.

8. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Cloudy 42%
- Promising 29%
- Status quo 24%
- Shining 3%
- Hopeless 2%

9. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANAGER?
- Jim Cornette 74%
- Harley Race 21%
- Others 5%

10. SHOULD WRESTLING HAVE A MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE?
- Yes 8%
- No 92%

11. DO YOU THINK STEROID USE IS STILL PREVALENT IN WRESTLING?
- Yes 35%
- No 65%

12. IF YOU COULD WATCH A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH AT ANY VENUE, WHERE WOULD IT BE?
- Madison Square Garden 71%
- The Tokyo Dome 8%
- Manhattan Center 7%
- Baltimore Arena 5%
- Korakuen Hall, Tokyo 3%
- Others 6%

13. WILL HULK HOGAN RETURN?
- Yes 91%
- No 9%

14. SHOULD ALL TITLES CHANGE HANDS ON DISQUALIFICATIONS AND COUNTOUTS?
- Yes 87%
- No 13%

15. WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR IN WRESTLING?
- Jesse Ventura 48%
- Jim Ross 23%
- Tony Schiavone 12%
- Bobby Heenan 11%
- Others 6%

16. WILL WE SEE A WWF WORLD CHAMPION VS. WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR?
- No 94%
- Yes 6%

17. ARE THE BEST OF TODAY'S WRESTLERS AS GOOD AS THE BEST OF 40 YEARS AGO?
- Yes 68%
- No 32%

18. IS PAY-PER-VIEW GOOD FOR WRESTLING?
- Yes 71%
- No 29%

19. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 90%
- Mediocre 3%
- Good 2%
- Excellent 0%

20. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 53%
- Mediocre 27%
- Good 19%
- Excellent 1%

21. WHO IS THE BEST REFEREE IN WRESTLING?
- Nick Patrick 40%
- Dave Hebner 26%
- Bill Alfonso 19%
- Randy Anderson 11%
- Others 4%

22. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WWF

PRESIDENT JACK TUNNEY FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
- C 34%
- B 30%
- D 28%
- F 4%
- A 4%

23. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?
- Vince McMahon 92%
- Ted Turner 5%
- Others 3%

24. DID WCW MAKE THE RIGHT MOVE BY NAMING NICK BOCKWINKEL COMMISSIONER?
- Yes 39%
- No 29%
- Not sure 32%

25. WILL VINCE McMAHON BE FOUND GUILTY OF ILLEGAL DISTRIBUTION OF STEROIDS?
- No 66%
- Yes 23%
- Not sure 11%

26. IF YOU ANSWERED YES, WILL McMAHON SPEND TIME IN JAIL?
- No 76%
- Yes 20%
- Not sure 4%

27. WHICH IS THE BEST REGULARLY AIRED WEEKLY WRESTLING SHOW ON TV?
- WWF *Monday Night Raw* 84%
- WCW *Saturday Night* 8%
- Others 8%

28. WHICH IS ANNUALLY THE BEST WRESTLING PAY-PER-VIEW SHOW?
- Royal Rumble 23%
- WrestleMania 20%
- Starrcade 16%
- Great American Bash 14%
- Survivor Series 13%
- Others 14%

29. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW World 51%
- WWF World 49%

30. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?
- Better 64%
- Worse 36%

31. SHOULD CAGE MATCHES BE BANNED?
- No 96%
- Yes 4%

32. WILL THE REVIVED WWF WORLD WOMEN'S TITLE SUCCEED?
- Yes 51%
- No 38%
- Don't know 11%

33. WHO HAS THE BEST CLOTHESLINE?
- Razor Ramon 28%
- Rick Steiner 26%
- Big Van Vader 21%
- Stan Hansen 11%
- Others 14%

34. WHO HAS THE BEST DROPKICK?
- 2 Cold Scorpio 39%
- Jushin Liger 27%
- The Kid 11%
- Brian Pillman 9%
- Bret Hart 5%
- Others 9%

35. WHO HAS THE BEST DDT?
- Shawn Michaels 19%
- Jake Roberts 17%
- Diesel 15%
- Arn Anderson 14%
- Tom Prichard 13%
- Others 22%

36. WHO HAS THE BEST FIGURE-FOUR LEGLOCK?
- Ric Flair 88%
- Sting 4%
- Rick Rude 3%
- Others 5%

37. WHO HAS THE BEST ELBOWSMASH?
- Dustin Rhodes 36%
- Randy Savage 33%
- Big Van Vade 10%
- Jeff Jarrett 6%
- Jerry Lawler 4%
- Others 11%

38. WHO HAS THE BEST FLYING BODYPRESS?
- The Kid 25%
- Rick Steamboat 23%
- Brian Pillman 19%
- Jushin Liger 9%
- 2 Cold Scorpio 7%
- Others 17%

39. WHO HAS THE BEST FLYING FISTDROP?
- Jerry Lawler 73%
- 2 Cold Scorpio 11%
- Randy Savage 6%
- Others 10%

40. WHO HAS THE BEST PILEDRIVER?
- Undertaker 84%
- Jerry Lawler 13%
- Others 3%

41. WHO HAS THE BEST SAVATE KICK?
- Sabu 65%
- Chris Adams 12%
- Tom Prichard 7%
- Jim Del Ray 6%
- Others 10%

42. WHO HAS THE BEST LEGDROP?
- Yokozuna 32%
- Bobby Eaton 25%
- The Patriot 18%
- Hulk Hogan 12%
- Sting 6%
- Others 7%

43. WHO HAS THE BEST POWERSLAM?
- Big Van Vader 41%
- Steve Williams 39%
- Ron Simmons 10%
- Bam Bam Bigelow 5%
- Others 5%

44. WHO HAS THE BEST MOONSAULT?
- Sabu 54%
- Jushin Liger 20%
- 2 Cold Scorpio 10%
- Big Van Vader 7%
- The Kid 4%
- The Great Muta 3%
- Others 2%

45. WHO HAS THE BEST SCORPION DEATHLOCK?
- Bret Hart 89%
- Sting 5%
- Owen Hart 3%
- Others 3%

46. WHO HAS THE BEST SLEEPERHOLD?
- Ted DiBiase 95%
- Others 5%

47. WHO HAS THE BEST SUNSET FLIP?
- 2 Cold Scorpio 31%
- Johnny B. Badd 20%
- Sting 16%
- Bret Hart 15%
- Others 18%

48. WHO HAS THE BEST VERTICAL SUPLEX?
- Owen Hart 55%
- Lex Luger 22%
- Steve Austin 8%
- Big Van Vader 6%
- Rick Rude 6%
- Others 3%

49. WHO HAS THE BEST POWER BOMB?
- Big Van Vader 90%
- Razor Ramon 6%
- Adam Bomb 2%
- Others 2%

50. WHO HAS THE BEST OVERALL FINISHER?
- Big Van Vader (power bomb) . . .34%
- Sabu (moonsault) 20%
- Bret Hart (sharp shooter) 15%
- Ric Flair (figure-four) 10%
- Others 21%

PWI POLL: 1995

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Shawn Michaels 26%
- Sabu 19%
- Big Van Vader 13%
- Bret Hart 11%
- Jushin Liger 5%
- Others 26%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Ric Flair 63%
- Sabu 8%
- Lou Thesz 6%
- Buddy Rogers 5%
- Big Van Vader 5%
- Others 13%

3. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- The Legion of Doom 36%
- Rick & Scott Steiner 20%
- Midnight Express 18%
- British Bulldogs 8%
- Hart Foundation 7%
- Others 11%

4. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN HULK HOGAN AND DIESEL?
- Hulk Hogan 84%
- Diesel 16%

5. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN HULK HOGAN AND HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING CHAMPION GEORGE FOREMAN?
- Hulk Hogan 83%
- George Foreman 17%

6. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST-QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 58%
- WWF 36%
- Others 6%

7. HAS WCW SURPASSED THE WWF AS THE PREMIER FEDERATION IN THE WORLD?
- No 49%
- Yes 43%
- Undecided 8%

8. WILL BRET AND OWEN HART REUNITE IN 1995?
- No 75%
- Yes 25%

9. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Promising 43%
- Status quo 33%
- Cloudy 15%
- Shining 8%
- Hopeless 1%

10. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS ONE YEAR AGO?
- Better 76%
- Worse 24%

11. WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST SUPERSTAR?
- Shawn Michaels 38%
- Woman 15%
- Diesel 13%
- Tamara Murphy Fytch 11%
- Others 23%

12. DO YOU THINK STEROID USE IS STILL PREVALENT IN WRESTLING?
- No 82%
- Yes 18%

13. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANAGER?
- Jim Cornette 54%
- Jimmy Hart 15%
- Col. Rob Parker 11%

When The Road Warriors were in their prime, was there any more exciting team to watch?

- Harley Race 7%
- Ted DiBiase 6%
- Others 7%

14. IF YOU COULD WATCH A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH AT ANY VENUE, WHERE WOULD IT BE?
- Madison Square Garden 62%
- ECW Arena 19%
- Tokyo Dome 6%
- Baltimore Arena 5%
- Others 8%

15. WILL HULK HOGAN RE-RETIRE?
- Yes 69%
- No 31%

16. WILL RIC FLAIR COME OUT OF RETIREMENT?
- No 57%
- Yes 43%

17. WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR IN WRESTLING?
- Bobby Heenan 21%
- Jerry Lawler 17%
- Tony Schiavone 15%
- Gene Okerlund 12%
- Joey Styles 8%
- Jim Ross 6%
- Vince McMahon 5%
- Others 16%

18. WILL WE SEE A WWF WORLD CHAMPION VS. WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR?
- No 99%
- Yes 1%

19. ARE THE BEST OF TODAY'S WRESTLERS AS GOOD AS THE BEST OF 40 YEARS AGO?
- Yes 65%
- No 35%

20. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 98%
- Mediocre 2%

21. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 39%
- Mediocre 37%
- Good 22%
- Excellent 2%

22. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WWF PRESIDENT JACK TUNNEY FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
- C 30%
- D 28%
- B 22%
- A 10%
- F 10%

23. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WCW COMMISSIONER NICK BOCKWINKEL FOR

HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
- D 33%
- C 30%
- B 25%
- F 7%
- A 5%

24. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?
- Hulk Hogan 62%
- Vince McMahon 33%
- Ted Turner 3%
- Others 2%

25. WHICH IS THE BEST WEEKLY WRESTLING SHOW ON TV?
- WWF *Monday Night Raw* 80%
- WCW *Saturday Night* 8%
- WWF *Action Zone* 4%
- Others 8%

26. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW World 59%
- WWF World 41%

27. HAVE BULL NAKANO AND ALUNDRA BLAYZE SUCCEEDED IN REJUVENATING WOMEN'S WRESTLING IN NORTH AMERICA?
- No 74%
- Yes 23%
- Too soon to tell 3%

28. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?
- Big Van Vader 53%
- Cactus Jack 21%
- Sabu 11%
- Terry Funk 6%
- King Kong Bundy 4%
- Kevin Sullivan 3%
- Others 2%

29. WHO IS WRESTLING'S FASTEST MAN?
- Sabu 54%
- The Kid 43%
- Others 3%

30. DOES THE ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP POSE A THREAT TO PRO WRESTLING?
- No 83%
- Yes 17%

31. WHICH IS THE BEST INDEPENDENT FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- ECW 48%
- Smoky Mountain 22%
- USWA 17%
- Others 13%

32. WHO GIVES THE BEST INTERVIEWS?
- Big Van Vader 20%
- Shawn Michaels 18%
- Jerry Lawler 15%
- Owen Hart 14%
- Bob Backlund 13%
- Others 20%

33. WHICH IS THE BEST SPECIALTY MATCH?
- Steel cage 17%
- Barbed wire 15%
- Chain 14%
- "I quit" 12%
- Texas death 8%
- Others 34%

34. WHO IS THE BEST FOREIGN WRESTLER?
- The Great Muta 22%
- Toshiaki Kawada 20%
- Shinya Hashimoto 18%
- Konnan 10%
- Bull Nakano 5%
- Others 25%

35. WHO IS THE BEST FOREIGN WRESTLER CURRENTLY COMPETING IN NORTH AMERICA?
- Sabu 41%
- Davey Boy Smith 26%
- Lord Steven Regal 12%
- Yokozuna 7%
- Others 14%

36. WHICH WAS THE BEST PAY-PER-VIEW EVENT OF THE YEAR?
- WrestleMania X 25%
- Halloween Havoc 23%
- Royal Rumble 21%
- Bash at the Beach 12%
- Starrcade 9%
- Others 10%

37. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST NEW PROSPECT?
- Alex Wright 23%
- Bryant Anderson 18%
- Jean-Paul LeVeque 17%
- Osamu Nishimura 9%
- Others 33%

38. WHO HAS THE BEST CLOTHESLINE?
- Rick Steiner 27%
- Hulk Hogan 26%
- Irwin R. Schyster 22%
- Lex Luger 18%
- Others 7%

39. WHO HAS THE BEST DROPKICK?
- The Kid 33%
- 2 Cold Scorpio 31%
- Jeff Jarrett 15%
- Owen Hart 12%

40. WHO HAS THE BEST ELBOW-SMASH?
- Randy Savage 30%
- Diesel 28%
- Dustin Rhodes 20%
- Brian Knobs 10%
- Others 12%

41. WHO HAS THE BEST LEGDROP?
- Hulk Hogan 68%
- Yokozuna 11%
- Sabu 9%
- The Patriot 6%
- Others 6%

42. WHO HAS THE BEST FLYING BODYPRESS?
- 2 Cold Scorpio 22%
- Owen Hart 20%
- The Kid 18%
- Brian Pillman 15%
- Others 25%

43. WHO HAS THE BEST PILEDRIVER?
- Undertaker 79%
- Jerry Lawler 12%
- Shawn Michaels 9%

44. WHO HAS THE BEST SAVATE KICK?
- Shawn Michaels 41%
- Sabu 35%
- Kwang 10%
- Others 14%

45. WHO HAS THE BEST POWERSLAM?
- Davey Boy Smith 32%
- Steve Williams 31%
- Razor Ramon 18%
- Ron Simmons 9%
- Lex Luger 8%
- Others 2%

46. WHO HAS THE BEST MOONSAULT?
- Sabu 57%
- Big Van Vader 14%
- Al Snow 12%
- The Kid 11%
- 2 Cold Scorpio 5%
- Others 1%

47. WHO HAS THE BEST SCORPION DEATHLOCK?
- Bret Hart 68%
- Owen Hart 20%
- Sting 6%
- Others 6%

48. WHO HAS THE BEST VERTICAL SUPLEX?
- Davey Boy Smith 36%
- Lex Luger 25%
- Steve Austin 20%
- Owen Hart 8%
- Tasmaniac 7%
- Others 4%

49. WHO HAS THE BEST POWER BOMB?
- Big Van Vader 52%
- Diesel 46%
- Others 2%

50. WHO HAS THE BEST OVERALL FINISHER?
- Big Van Vader (power bomb) 28%
- Diesel (power bomb) 24%
- 911 (chokeslam) 18%
- Bob Backlund (chicken wing) 13%
- Hulk Hogan (legdrop) 12%
- Others 5%

PWI POLL: 1996

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Rey Misterio Jr. 19%
- Shawn Michaels 15%
- Bret Hart 14%
- Sabu 12%
- Mitsuharu Misawa 7%
- The Great Muta 5%
- Others 28%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Sabu 25%
- Shawn Michaels 22%
- Ric Flair 8%
- Big Van Vader 7%
- Antonio Inoki 6%
- Others 32%

3. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- The Road Warriors 30%
- Rick & Scott Steiner 16%
- The Midnight Express 11%
- The Nasty Boys 10%
- The British Bulldogs 7%
- The Hart Foundation 7%
- Public Enemy 5%
- Others 14%

4. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN BRET HART AND RANDY SAVAGE?
- Bret Hart 86%
- Randy Savage 14%

5. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 48%
- WWF 39%
- ECW 11%
- Others 2%

6. HAS WCW SURPASSED THE WWF AS THE PREMIER FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- Yes 58%
- No 40%
- Undecided 2%

7. WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WILL THE WWF AND WCW ELIMINATE ALL NON-TELEVISED ARENA CARDS FROM THEIR SCHEDULES?
- No 82%
- Yes 13%
- Not sure 5%

8. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Status quo 38%
- Promising 34%
- Cloudy 20%
- Shining 7%
- Hopeless 1%

9. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANAGER?
- Jimmy Hart 43%
- Jim Cornette 40%
- Sherri Martel 6%
- Kevin Sullivan 5%
- Ted DiBiase 4%
- Others 2%

10. WHO REALLY RULES MONDAY NIGHTS?
- WCW 48%
- WWF 43%
- Even 5%
- Neither 4%

11. HOGAN OR FLAIR: WHO WILL LAUGH LAST?
- Hulk Hogan 69%
- Ric Flair 31%

12. SHOULD SHAWN MICHAELS RETIRE?
- No 71%
- Yes 14%
- Undecided 15%

13. WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST WOMAN?
- Tammy "Sunny" Fytch 47%
- Beulah McGillicutty 19%
- Woman 15%
- The Diamond Doll 14%
- Others 5%

14. WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR IN WRESTLING?
- Jerry Lawler 25%
- Joey Styles 23%
- Bobby Heenan 12%
- Jim Ross 8%
- Tony Schiavone 7%
- Gene Okerlund 6%
- Vince McMahon 5%
- Others 14%

15. WILL WE SEE A WWF WORLD CHAMPION VS. WCW WORLD CHAMPION MATCH WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR?
- No 100%
- Yes 0%

16. IS THERE JUST ENOUGH, TOO MUCH, OR NOT ENOUGH PAY-PER-VIEW WRESTLING?
- Just enough 53%
- Too much 44%
- Not enough 3%

17. SHOULD THE ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIPS BE OUTLAWED?
- No 94%
- Yes 6%

18. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 90%
- Mediocre 10%

19. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Mediocre 38%
- Poor 37%
- Good 18%
- Excellent 7%

20. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO INTERIM WWF PRESIDENT GORILLA MONSOON FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
- D 32%
- A 30%
- F 18%
- B 17%
- C 3%

21. GIVE A LETTER TO WCW COMMISSIONER NICK BOCKWINKEL FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
- D 48%
- F 25%
- C 19%
- B 5%
- A 3%

22. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?
- Hulk Hogan 44%
- Vince McMahon 24%
- Ted Turner 20%
- Eric Bischoff 12%

23. WHICH IS THE BEST WRESTLING SHOW ON TV, PAY-PER-VIEW, CABLE, OR OTHERWISE?
- WWF's Royal Rumble 19%
- WCW's Starrcade 16%
- WWF's WrestleMania 14%
- WWF *Monday Night Raw* 12%
- WCW *Monday Nitro* 12%
- WWF King of the Ring 9%
- Others 18%

24. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WWF World 52%
- WCW World 48%

25. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?
- Better 61%
- Worse 39%

26. SHOULD *PWI* RECOGNIZE A THIRD WORLD TITLE?
- No 91%
- Yes 9%

27. WHO IS THE MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Shane Douglas 12%
- Eddy Guerrero 11%
- Dan Severn 9%
- The Kid 8%
- Dean Malenko 7%
- Steve Austin 6%
- Others 47%

28. WHO IS THE MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Lex Luger 40%
- Sid Vicious 30%
- Owen Hart 9%
- The Undertaker 8%
- Hulk Hogan 6%
- Others 7%

29. WHO IS WRESTLING'S WILDEST DAREDEVIL?
- Rey Misterio Jr. 42%
- Sabu 35%
- Jushin Liger 5%
- Others 18%

30. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?
- Big Van Vader 53%
- The Undertaker 17%
- The Giant 10%
- Cactus Jack 8%
- One Man Gang 5%
- Others 7%

31. WHICH IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLING TAG TEAM?
- Public Enemy 42%
- The Nasty Boys 41%
- The Gangstas 11%
- PG-13 ..... 4%
- Others 2%

32. WHICH IS THE BEST INDEPENDENT FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- ECW 62%
- USWA 15%
- AAA 14%
- Others 9%

33. WHO GIVES THE BEST INTERVIEWS?
- Cactus Jack 19%
- Big Van Vader 17%
- Paul Bearer 13%
- Jeff Jarrett 12%
- Jim Cornette 11%
- Public Enemy 9%
- Bob Backlund 6%
- Others 13%

34. WHO GIVES THE WORST INTERVIEWS?
- Randy Savage 24%
- Hulk Hogan 22%
- Ric Flair 14%
- Razor Ramon 12%
- The Kid 10%
- Others 18%

35. WHICH IS THE BEST SPECIALTY MATCH?
- Falls-count-anywhere 35%
- Steel cage 15%
- Ladder 14%
- Chain 13%
- Others 23%

36. WHO IS THE BEST FOREIGN WRESTLER?
- Mitsuharu Misawa 24%
- The Great Muta 22%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 18%
- Antonio Inoki 9%
- Nobuhiko Takada 8%
- Jushin Liger 7%
- Others 12%

37. WHO IS THE BEST FOREIGN WRESTLER CURRENTLY WRESTLING PRIMARILY IN NORTH AMERICA?
- Sabu 35%
- Davey Boy Smith 24%
- Yokozuna 14%
- Lord Steven Regal 11%
- Others 16%

38. WILL 1996 BE HULK HOGAN'S FINAL YEAR IN WRESTLING?
- No 59%
- Yes 39%
- Unsure 2%

39. WHO HAS THE BEST CLOTHESLINE?
- Hulk Hogan 40%
- Lex Luger 15%
- The Undertaker 14%
- The Giant 10%
- Others 21%

40. WHO HAS THE BEST DROPKICK?
- Alex Wright 22%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 19%
- The Kid 18%
- Eddy Guerrero 17%
- 2 Cold Scorpio 16%
- Others 8%

41. WHO HAS THE BEST MOONSAULT?
- 2 Cold Scorpio 33%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 32%
- Sabu 19%
- The Great Muta 10%
- Big Van Vader 6%

42. WHO HAS THE BEST FLYING BODYPRESS?
- Sabu 40%
- Shawn Michaels 30%
- The Kid 10%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 8%
- Brian Pillman 7%
- Others 6%

43. WHO HAS THE BEST PILEDRIVER?
- The Undertaker 80%
- Jerry Lawler 8%
- Jeff Jarrett 5%
- Paul Orndorff 5%
- Others 2%

44. WHO HAS THE BEST LEGDROP?
- Hulk Hogan 75%
- Diesel 10%
- Yokozuna 9%
- Ahmed Johnson 4%
- Others 2%

45. WHO HAS THE BEST POWERSLAM?
- Ahmed Johnson 29%
- Davey Boy Smith 28%
- Lex Luger 20%
- Big Van Vader 15%
- Others 8%

46. WHO HAS THE BEST SCORPION DEATHLOCK/SHARPSHOOTER?
- Bret Hart 45%
- Sting 44%
- Owen Hart 6%
- Others 5%

47. WHO HAS THE BEST VERTICAL SUPLEX?
- Davey Boy Smith 35%
- Ric Flair 21%
- Hulk Hogan 15%
- Lex Luger 13%
- Brian Christopher 9%
- Others 7%

48. WHO HAS THE BEST POWER BOMB?
- Big Van Vader 46%
- Diesel 46%
- Sid Vicious 8%

49. WHO HAS THE BEST OVERALL FINISHER?
- Bret Hart (sharpshooter) 25%
- The Undertaker (tombstone piledriver) 22%
- Ahmed Johnson (Pearl River Plunge) 15%
- Razor Ramon (Razor's Edge) 4%
- Hulk Hogan (legdrop) 13%
- Others 11%

50. WHAT IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANEUVER?
- The moonsault 47%
- The flying bodypress 22%
- The double dropkick 12%
- The vertical suplex 11%
- Others 8%

PWI POLL: 1997

The experts who tabbed Rocky Maivia a superstar of tomorrow in 1997 really knew what they were talking about.

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Rey Misterio Jr. 17%
- Shawn Michaels 16%
- Eddy Guerrero 13%
- Mitsuharu Misawa 12%
- Bret Hart 12%
- Jushin Liger 8%
- Dean Malenko 6%
- Others 16%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Shawn Michaels 22%
- Sabu 20%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 16%
- Steve Austin 15%
- Chris Benoit 11%
- Others 16%

3. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Rick & Scott Steiner 28%
- The Road Warriors 17%
- The Midnight Express 14%
- Harlem Heat 9%
- The British Bulldogs 6%
- The Hart Foundation 5%
- The Eliminators 5%
- Others 16%

4. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN HULK HOGAN AND SHAWN MICHAELS?
- Shawn Michaels 65%
- Hulk Hogan 35%

5. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 47%
- WWF 37%
- ECW 16%

6. WHICH IS THE PREMIER FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW 60%
- WWF 37%
- ECW 3%

7. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Promising 42%
- Status quo 25%
- Cloudy 17%
- Shining 16%
- Hopeless 0%

8. WHO REALLY RULES MONDAY NIGHTS?
- WCW 63%
- WWF 33%
- Even/not sure 4%

9. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANAGER?
- Jimmy Hart 35%
- Ted DiBiase 30%
- Clarence Mason 13%
- Sherri Martel 8%
- Jim Cornette 8%
- Others 6%

10. WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST WOMAN?
- Kimberly 36%
- Sunny 32%
- Marlena 9%
- Debra McMichael 7%
- Beulah McGillicutty 6%
- Francine 5%
- Others 5%

11. WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR IN WRESTLING?
- Jim Ross 23%
- Mike Tenay 19%
- Jerry Lawler 18%
- Joey Styles 16%
- Tony Schiavone 10%
- Bobby Heenan 9%
- Others 5%

12. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 92%
- Mediocre 8%

13. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Mediocre 34%
- Poor 33%
- Good 28%
- Excellent 5%

14. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?
- Eric Bischoff 34%
- Hulk Hogan 31%
- Vince McMahon 26%
- Ted Turner 9%

15. WHICH IS THE BEST WRESTLING SHOW ON TV, PAY-PER-VIEW, CABLE, OR OTHERWISE?
- WCW *Monday Nitro* 40%
- WWF *Monday Night Raw* 19%
- WWF's Royal Rumble 15%
- WWF's WrestleMania 10%
- WCW's Starrcade 6%
- ECW's weekly show 6%
- Others 4%

16. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WWF World 54%
- WCW World 46%

17. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?
- Better 81%
- Worse 19%

18. WHO IS THE MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Dean Malenko 17%
- Chris Benoit 15%
- "Diamond" Dallas Page 14%
- Eddy Guerrero 7%
- Hunter Hearst Helmsley 6%
- Chris Candido 5%
- Others 36%

19. WHO IS THE MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Hulk Hogan 38%
- Big Van Vader 25%
- Sid Vicious 14%
- Lex Luger 8%
- Others 15%

20. WHO IS WRESTLING'S WILDEST DAREDEVIL?
- Rey Misterio Jr. 3%
- Sabu 22%
- Jushin Liger 15%
- Shawn Michaels 5%
- Others 5%

21. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?
- Sid Vicious 36%
- The Giant 28%
- The Undertaker 16%

Mankind 9%
The Sandman 6%

22. WHICH IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLING TAG TEAM?
Scott Hall & Kevin Nash 37%
Harlem Heat 19%
The Nasty Boys 18%
The Gangstas 13%
The Eliminators 5%
Others 8%

23. WHICH IS THE BEST INDEPENDENT FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
ECW 89%
USWA 7%
Others 4%

24. WHO GIVES THE BEST INTERVIEWS?
Steve Austin 17%
Mankind 16%
Arn Anderson 5%
Ric Flair 14%
Shawn Michaels 13%
Others 25%

25. WHICH IS THE BEST SPECIALTY MATCH?
Falls-count-anywhere 32%
Steel cage 17%
Royal Rumble 12%
Ladder 10%
Chain 9%
Others 20%

26. WHO IS THE BEST FOREIGN WRESTLER?
Mitsuharu Misawa 56%
Jushin Liger 14%
Shinya Hashimoto 8%
Konnan 5%
Others 17%

27. WILL 1997 BE HULK HOGAN'S FINAL YEAR IN WRESTLING?
No 73%
Yes 25%
Unsure 2%

28. WHICH WRESTLER WILL BE THE NEXT TO JUMP FEDERATIONS?
Hulk Hogan 13%
Shawn Michaels 12%
Sting 11%
Big Van Vader 9%
Lex Luger 9%
The Giant 7%
The Undertaker 6%
Others 33%

29. CAN THE NWO OVERTAKE WCW?
No 64%
Yes 26%
Unsure 10%

30. ARE THERE TOO MANY WRESTLING PAY-PER-VIEWS?
Yes 64%
No 36%

31. SHOULD ECW GET WORLD TITLE STATUS?
Yes 51%
No 44%
Unsure 5%

32. WHO IS THE MOST DANGEROUS WRESTLER?
The Giant 59%
Steve Austin 17%
Sid Vicious 6%
Big Van Vader 5%
Others 13%

33. SHOULD THE WWF MOVE *RAW* TO ANOTHER NIGHT?
Yes 79%
No 21%

34. CAN WOMEN'S WRESTLING THRIVE AGAIN IN THE U.S.?
No 78%
Yes 22%

35. SHOULD WRESTLING GET A PG-14 RATING?
Yes 54%
No 40%
Unsure 6%

36. WHO IS THE MOST PROMISING YOUNG STAR?
Rocky Maivia 34%
Chris Jericho 29%
Stevie Richards 7%
Others 30%

37. IS WRESTLING GANG VIOLENCE GETTING OUT OF HAND?
Yes 51%
No 49%

38. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WWF PRESIDENT GORILLA MONSOON FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
C 38%
B 33%
A 12%
D 12%
F 5%

39. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WCW SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT ERIC BISCHOFF FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
F 77%
D 9%
C 7%
B 4%
A 3%

40. WILL THE FOX NETWORK OR ANY OTHER NATIONAL OVER-THE-AIR NETWORK AIR A REGULAR WRESTLING PROGRAM WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?
Yes 51%
No 49%

41. WHO HAS THE BEST CLOTHESLINE?
Lex Luger 29%
Kevin Nash 25%
The Giant 15%
The Undertaker 9%
Rick Steiner 8%
Others 14%

42. WHO HAS THE BEST DROPKICK?
Rey Misterio Jr. 18%
Syxx 17%
Alex Wright 16%
Eddy Guerrero 14%
Jeff Jarrett 13%
Owen Hart 9%
Others 13%

43. WHO HAS THE BEST MOONSAULT?
Rey Misterio Jr. 41%
Flash Funk 30%
Sabu 15%
Others 14%

44. WHO HAS THE BEST PILEDRIVER?
The Undertaker 92%
Others 8%

45. WHO HAS THE BEST POWERSLAM?
Davey Boy Smith 47%
Ahmed Johnson 23%
Lex Luger 22%
Others 8%

46. WHO HAS THE BEST SUBMISSION LEGLOCK?
Bret Hart 49%
Dean Malenko 40%
Others 11%

47. WHO HAS THE BEST VERTICAL SUPLEX?
Davey Boy Smith 48%
Taz 15%
Chris Benoit 11%
The Giant 9%
Shane Douglas 8%
Lex Luger 5%
Others 4%

48. WHO HAS THE BEST POWER BOMB?
Kevin Nash 37%
Sid Vicious 35%
Big Van Vader 22%
Others 6%

49. WHO HAS THE BEST OVERALL FINISHER?
"Diamond" Dallas Page (Diamond cutter) 19%
The Undertaker (tombstone piledriver) 18%
Steve Austin (Stone-Cold stunner) 16%
Bret Hart (sharpshooter) 14%
Ahmed Johnson (Pearl River Plunge) 13%
The Giant (choke-slam) 9%
Others 11%

50. WHAT IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANEUVER?
The power bomb 38%
The moonsault 30%
The choke-slam 12%
Others 20%

PWI POLL: 1998

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Eddy Guerrero 18%
- Shawn Michaels 15%
- Dean Malenko 14%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 12%
- Bret Hart 9%
- Chris Jericho 7%
- Ultimo Dragon 5%
- Others 20%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Rey Misterio Jr. 28%
- Shawn Michaels 20%
- Sabu 19%
- Ultimo Dragon 11%
- Steve Austin 6%
- Others 16%

3. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Rick & Scott Steiner 32%
- The Road Warriors 15%
- The Midnight Express 12%
- Scott Hall & Kevin Nash 8%
- The Rock 'n' Roll Express 5%
- The Hart Foundation 4%
- Harlem Heat 3%
- Others 21%

4. WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN SHAWN MICHAELS AND STING?
- Shawn Michaels 52%
- Sting 48%

5. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 59%
- WWF 36%
- ECW 5%

6. WHICH IS THE PREMIER FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW 61%
- WWF 35%
- ECW 4%

7. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Promising 41%
- Shining 37%
- Status quo 19%
- Cloudy 3%
- Hopeless 0%

8. WHO REALLY RULES MONDAY NIGHTS?
- WCW 84%
- WWF 16%

9. WILL HULK HOGAN RETURN TO THE WWF DURING THE NEXT YEAR?
- Yes 51%
- No 41%
- Undecided 8%

10. WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST WOMAN?
- Sunny 28%
- Sable 24%
- Kimberly 22%
- Beulah McGillicutty 12%
- Francine 6%
- Chyna 5%
- Others 3%

11. WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR IN WRESTLING?
- Mike Tenay 27%
- Tony Schiavone 19%
- Jim Ross 17%
- Larry Zbyszko 9%
- Joey Styles 9%
- Jerry Lawler 8%
- Bobby Heenan 7%
- Others 4%

12. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Poor 81%
- Mediocre 19%

13. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Mediocre 33%
- Good 32%
- Poor 25%
- Excellent 10%

14. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?
- Eric Bischoff 40%
- Vince McMahon 31%
- Hulk Hogan 20%
- Paul E. Dangerously 5%
- Others 4%

15. WHICH IS THE BEST WEEKLY WRESTLING SHOW ON TV?
- WCW *Monday Nitro* 47%
- WWF *Raw* 34%
- WCW *Thunder* 11%
- ECW's weekly show 6%
- Others 2%

16. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW World 59%
- WWF World 41%

17. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?
- Better 94%
- Worse 6%

18. WHO IS THE MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Chris Jericho 16%
- Rocky Maivia 15%
- Hunter Hearst Helmsley 14%
- Disco Inferno 11%
- Taka Michinoku 9%
- Others 35%

19. WHO IS THE MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Sting 29%
- Curt Hennig 24%
- Steve Austin 15%
- Konnan 9%
- Lex Luger 7%
- The Sandman 6%
- Others 10%

20. WHO IS WRESTLING'S WILDEST DAREDEVIL?
- Sabu 28%
- Rey Misterio Jr 26%
- Cactus Jack 18%
- Shawn Michaels 11%
- Rob Van Dam 7%
- Others 10%

21. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?
- Steve Austin 33%
- Cactus Jack 22%
- "Diamond" Dallas Page 18%
- Bill Goldberg 12%
- New Jack 6%
- Others 9%

22. WHAT PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE FROM ANOTHER SPORT SHOULD PURSUE A FULL-TIME CAREER AS A WRESTLER?
- Dennis Rodman 18%
- Kevin Greene 16%
- Mike Tyson 15%
- Reggie White 12%
- Butterbean 6%
- Others 33%

23. WILL MUSIC CITY WRESTLING BECOME AS STRONG AS THE USWA WAS?
- Yes 48%
- No 33%
- Undecided 19%

24. WHO GIVES THE BEST INTER-

VIEWS?
Steve Austin 22%
Larry Zbyszko 19%
Ric Flair 16%
Hulk Hogan 13%
Rocky Maivia 7%
Others 23%

25. WHICH IS THE BEST SPECIALTY MATCH?
Falls-count-anywhere 33%
Ladder 18%
Steel cage 16%
Barbed wire 11%
Others 22%

26. WHO IS THE BEST JAPANESE WRESTLER?
Mitsuharu Misawa 36%
Kensuke Sasaki 21%
Ultimo Dragon 18%
Taka Michinoku 7%
Keiji Muto 5%
Shinya Hashimoto 4%
Masa Chono 3%
Others 6%

27. CAN THE WWF RECLAIM ITS SPOT AS THE NUMBER-ONE FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
No 53%
Yes 47%

28. WAS BRET HART SCREWED BY THE WWF?
Yes 64%
No 36%

29. WILL THE NWO SURVIVE ANOTHER YEAR?
Yes 51%
No 49%

30. AS SCOTT HALL OFTEN SAYS IN HIS IN-RING "SURVEYS," DO YOU GO TO WCW EVENTS PRIMARILY TO SEE THE NWO OR TO SEE WCW?
WCW 52%
NWO 48%

31. SHOULD ECW GET WORLD TITLE STATUS?
No 51%
Yes 48%
Unsure 1%

32. WHO IS THE MOST DANGEROUS WRESTLER?
Ken Shamrock 26%
Randy Savage 23%
The Giant 20%
Taz 9%
Others 22%

33. WAS ADDING *THUNDER* A GOOD IDEA BY WCW?
Yes 59%
No 41%

34. HAVE YOU EVER TURNED OFF A WWF SHOW BECAUSE OF LEWDNESS?
Yes 53%
No 47%

35. SHOULD THE WWF'S *RAW IS WAR* GET A PG-14 RATING?
Yes 63%
No 29%
Undecided 8%

36. WHO IS WRESTLING'S MOST PROMISING NEW STAR?
Bill Goldberg 34%
Taka Michinoku 25%
Justin Credible 13%
Juventud Guerrera 11%
Prince Iaukea 6%
Others 11%

37. SHOULD THERE BE MORE STRINGENT RULES ENFORCEMENT IN WRESTLING?
Yes 58%
No 42%

38. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WWF COMMISSIONER SGT. SLAUGHTER FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
D 37%
C 25%
B 20%
F 13%
A 5%

39. GIVE A LETTER GRADE TO WCW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN J.J. DILLON FOR HIS JOB PERFORMANCE: A, B, C, D, OR F
C 58%
D 14%
B 13%
A 10%
F 5%

40. SHOULD THIS BE RIC FLAIR'S LAST YEAR AS A WRESTLER?
Yes 54%
No 46%

41. WHO HAS THE BEST CLOTHESLINE?
Rick Steiner 28%
The Undertaker 26%
Vader 13%
Lex Luger 11%
Hawk 6%
Others 16%

42. WHO HAS THE BEST HURACANRANA?
Juventud Guerrera 37%
Scott Steiner 33%
Ken Shamrock 15%
Rey Misterio Jr. 7%
Others 8%

43. WHO HAS THE BEST MOONSAULT?
Ultimo Dragon 32%
Flash Funk 27%
Reckless Youth 11%
Rey Misterio Jr. 10%
Others 20%

44. WHO HAS THE BEST PILEDRIVER?
The Undertaker 81%
Kane 12%
Others 7%

45. WHICH IS THE BEST SUBMISSION HOLD?
Bret Hart's sharpshooter 28%
Ken Shamrock's anklelock 22%
Perry Saturn's Rings of Saturn 15%
Chris Benoit's Crippler crossface 3%
Taz' Taz-mission 12%
Others 10%

46. WHICH IS THE RISKIEST MOVE?
corkscrew plancha 31%
outside-the-ring huracanrana .22%
Michinoku driver 16%
Liger bomb 10%
Others 21%

47. WHO HAS THE BEST SUPLEXES?
Taz 38%
Ken Shamrock 14%
Chris Benoit 12%
Shane Douglas 11%
Dean Malenko 9%
Curt Hennig 7%
Others 9%

48. WHAT IS THE BEST TWO-MAN FINISHING MOVE USED BY A TAG TEAM?
The Steiners' top-rope bulldog 34%
The Road Warriors' clothesline 19%
Harlem Heat's Harlem hangover 17%
The Dudleys' 3D 13%
Others 17%

49. WHO HAS THE BEST SUBMISSION LEGLOCK?
Bret Hart 35%
Sting 18%
Dean Malenko 17%
Ken Shamrock 9%
Owen Hart 7%
Chris Jericho 4%
Others 10%

50. WHO HAS THE BEST OVERALL FINISHER?
Dallas Page (Diamond cutter) 24%
Steve Austin (Stone-Cold stunner) 22%
The Undertaker (tombstone piledriver) 15%
Bret Hart (sharpshooter) 11%
Lex Luger (torture rack) 9%
Taz (Taz-mission) 5%
Ultimo Dragon (Dragon sleeper) 4%
Others 10%

PWI POLL: 1999

1. WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Billy Kidman 17%
- Chris Benoit 15%
- X-Pac 13%
- Rey Misterio Jr. 12%
- Rob Van Dam 9%
- Juventud Guerrera 8%
- Others 26%

2. IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
- Rey Misterio Jr. 30%
- Steve Austin 20%
- Billy Kidman 10%
- Chris Benoit 8%
- Sabu 7%
- Ric Flair 6%
- Others 19%

3. DO YOU THINK IT'S GOOD OR BAD FOR WRESTLING PROMOTIONS TO INVOLVE MAINSTREAM STARS?
- Good 54%
- Bad 45%
- Undecided 1%

4. DO YOU THINK TELEVISED JAPANESE WRESTLING COULD CATCH ON IN THE U.S. IF IT WERE REGULARLY TELEVISED?
- No 49%
- Yes 45%
- Undecided 6%

5. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?
- WCW 57%
- WWF 35%
- ECW 8%

6. WHICH IS THE PREMIER FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW 49%
- WWF 48%
- ECW 3%

7. WOULD YOU JUDGE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?
- Shining 42%
- Promising 37%
- Status Quo 20%
- Cloudy 1%
- Hopeless 0%

8. WHO REALLY RULES MONDAY NIGHTS?
- WWF 60%
- WCW 40%

9. WHO WOULD WIN A NO-HOLDS-BARRED FIGHT BETWEEN ERIC BISCHOFF AND VINCE McMAHON JR.?
- McMahon 52%
- Bischoff 48%

10. WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST WOMAN?
- Sable 29%
- Tammy Lynn Sytch 19%
- Kimberly 16%
- Chyna 9%
- Elizabeth 8%
- Francine 7%
- Debra McMichael 5%
- Stacy Carter 4%
- Dawn Marie 2%
- Others 1%

11. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST TV COMMENTATOR?
- Jim Ross 32%
- Mike Tenay 30%
- Jerry Lawler 11%
- Tony Schiavone 10%
- Joey Styles 7%
- Bobby Heenan 6%
- Others 4%

12. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Good 50%
- Mediocre 35%
- Poor 15%

13. WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?
- Good 57%
- Excellent 30%
- Mediocre 7%
- Poor 6%

14. WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON IN WRESTLING?
- Vince McMahon 54%
- Eric Bischoff 33%
- Hulk Hogan 5%
- Steve Austin 3%
- Paul E. Dangerously 2%
- Others 3%

15. WHICH IS THE BEST WEEKLY WRESTLING SHOW ON TV?
- *Raw* 49%
- *Nitro* 47%
- ECW's weekly show 4%

16. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHAMPIONSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA?
- WCW World 52%
- WWF World 48%

17. IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?
- Better 99%
- Worse 1%

18. WHO IS THE MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- X-Pac 13%
- Juventud Guerrera 12%
- D-Lo Brown 10%
- Billy Gunn 9%
- Jerry Lynn 7%
- Dave "Fit" Finlay 5%
- Others 44%

19. WHO IS THE MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?
- Lex Luger 18%
- Undertaker 17%
- Bill Goldberg 14%
- Raven 13%
- Shane Douglas 10%
- Konnan 8%
- Reckless Youth 5%
- Others 15%

20. WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?
- Mankind 38%
- Steve Austin 22%
- Bam Bam Bigelow 10%
- Mahoney 7%
- The Dudleys 5%
- Others 18%

21. DID THE WWF AND WCW EXPLOIT THE PERSONAL PROBLEMS OF HAWK AND SCOTT HALL TO IMPROVE RATINGS?
- Yes 94%
- No 6%

22. IF YOU WERE TOLD THAT ONLY ONE WRESTLING FEDERATION WOULD EXIST IN 10 YEARS, WHICH WOULD IT BE?
- WCW 52%
- WWF 48%

23. WHEN JESSE VENTURA COMPLETES HIS FOUR-YEAR TERM AS MINNESOTA GOVERNOR, WHAT WILL BE THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE JOB HE DID?
- Good 51%
- Mediocre 30%
- Excellent 13%
- Poor 6%

24. WHO GIVES THE BEST INTERVIEWS?
- Ric Flair 24%
- Steve Austin 22%
- Mankind 15%
- Vince McMahon 10%
- Rocky Maivia 8%
- Chris Jericho 6%
- Hollywood Hogan 5%

Others 10%

25. WHO IS THE BEST MEXICAN WRESTLER?
Juventud Guerrera 34%
Rey Misterio Jr. 31%
Psicosis 18%
Rayo de Jalisco Jr. 5%
Abismo Negro 4%
Dr. Wagner Jr. 3%
Others 5%

26. WHO IS THE BEST JAPANESE WRESTLER?
Mitsuharu Misawa 52%
Keiji Muto 25%
Kensuke Sasaki 10%
Shinjiro Otani 4%
Jushin Liger 4%
Shinya Hashimoto 3%
Hayabusa 3%

27. SHOULD THE WWF HAVE MORE "BRAWL FOR ALL" SERIES?
No 82%
Yes 18%

28. WILL THE NWA SUCCEED IN ITS PLANS TO BECOME A NATIONAL FORCE AGAIN?
No 88%
Yes 12%

29. WILL THE NWO ELITE LAST?
No 63%
Yes 37%

30. DO YOU THINK FANS WATCH OR ATTEND WWF SHOWS FOR WRESTLING, SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT, OR BOTH?
Sports Entertainment 56%
Both 30%
Wrestling 14%

31. SHOULD ECW GET WORLD TITLE STATUS?
Yes 51%
No 49%

32. WHO IS THE MOST DANGEROUS WRESTLER?
Bill Goldberg 32%
Mankind 25%
Scott Steiner 12%
Ken Shamrock 9%
Taz 4%
Giant 3%
Others 15%

33. HAVE *THUNDER* AND *HEAT* BECOME PART OF YOUR WEEKLY WRESTLING SHOW WATCHING RITUAL?
Yes 61%
No 39%

34. AT WHAT AGE WOULD YOU ALLOW YOUR KID TO WATCH THE WWF?
15-18 .....38%
10-14 .....25%
Any age 18%
6-9 .....16%
No age 3%

35. DO YOU THINK FOX OR ANOTHER MAJOR MEDIA GROUP WILL SUCCESSFULLY FORM ANOTHER WRESTLING PROMOTION?
No 82%
Yes 18%

36. WHO IS WRESTLING'S MOST PROMISING NEW STAR?
Billy Kidman 30%
Val Venis 20%
D-Lo Brown 14%
Edge 11%
Sable 8%
Spike Dudley 5%
Others 12%

37. SHOULD THREE-WAY TITLE MATCHES BE BANNED?
No 56%
Yes 44%

38. WHICH WAS THE BEST WWF PAY-PER-VIEW OF 1998?
WrestleMania XIV 74%
SummerSlam 17%
Others 9%

39. WHICH WAS THE BEST WCW PAY-PER-VIEW OF 1998?
Bash at the Beach 28%
Starrcade 24%
Halloween Havoc 17%
Road Wild 12%
Others 19%

40. WHICH WAS THE BEST ECW PAY-PER-VIEW OF 1998?
HeatWave 49%
Living Dangerously 21%
Wrestlepalooza 18%
November to Remember 12%

41. WHICH IS THE BEST TOP-ROPE MANEUVER?
Billy Kidman's shooting star press 29%
Rob Van Dam's split-legged moonsault 21%
Juventud Guerrera's 450 splash 15%
Hayabusa's stardust press 13%
Eddy Guerrero's frog splash 9%
Others 13%

42. WHO POSSESSES THE BEST HURACANRANA?
Rey Misterio Jr. 54%
Juventud Guerrera 22%
Taka Michinoku 11%
Dragon Kid 5%
Others 8%

43. WHICH IS THE BEST POWER BOMB VARIATION?
Chris Candido's top-rope power bomb 27%
Jushin Liger's running Liger bomb 24%
Kevin Nash's jackknife power bomb 16%
Kenta Kobashi's orange bomb 7%
Others 26%

44. WHICH IS THE BEST ACE CRUSHER VARIATION?
Steve Austin's Stone-Cold stunner 42%
Johnny Ace's Ace crusher 34%
Dallas Page's Diamond cutter 11%
Disco Inferno's chartbuster 5%
Mikey Whipwreck's Whippersnapper 4%
Others 4%

45. WHICH IS THE BEST SUBMISSION HOLD?
Taz-mission 23%
Mandible claw 20%
Anklelock 19%
Lion tamer 15%
Steiner recliner 8%
Figure-four leglock 7%
Others 8%

46. WHICH IS THE BEST SUPLEX VARIATION?
Mitsuharu Misawa's release tiger suplex 33%
Chris Benoit's rolling German suplex 25%
Taz' dragon suplex 13%
Curt Hennig's fisherman suplex 12%
Others 17%

47. WHICH IS THE BEST DDT VARIATION?
Chavo Guerrero Jr.'s tornado DDT 29%
Mankind's double-arm DDT 24%
Shinjiro Otani's springboard DDT 18%
Gangrel's leaping DDT 8%
Others 21%

48. WHICH IS THE BEST PILEDRIVER VARIATION?
Kane's tombstone 35%
Taka Michinoku's Michinoku driver 21%
Undertaker's tombstone 20%
Bam Bam Bigelow's greetings from Asbury Park 13%
Juventud Guerrera's Juvi driver 9%
Others 2%

49. WHICH IS THE RISKIEST MANEUVER?
Space flying tiger drop 42%
Corkscrew plancha 22%
Asai moonsault 16%
Others 20%

50. WHO POSSESSES THE MOST EFFECTIVE FINISHER?
Bill Goldberg (jackhammer) 21%
Steve Austin (Stone-Cold stunner) 20%
Dallas Page (Diamond cutter) 18%
Billy Kidman (shooting star press) 15%
Taz (Taz-mission) 11%
Rocky Maivia (Rock bottom) 8%
Others 7%

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ringside

(Continued from page 9)

Hardcore Revolution, ECW's first video game, is definitely a keeper. The game features a barbed-wire match, lots and lots of blood, and an option for some rather colorful language.

does include some graphic language and some extreme violence—there's tons of blood—but there is an option that allows those modes to be turned off if they are found undesirable.

All in all, Acclaim did a brilliant job with *Hardcore Revolution*. It's certainly a must-have for all the hardcore wrestling gamers out there. In the May 2000 issue of *The Wrestler*, which hits newsstands on February 29, I'll have a more in-depth look at the game in my other column, "No Holds Barred."

Shane Douglas and the other members of **The Revolution** have a problem with the United States. Douglas has been ranting about the lack of morality in America and has threatened to burn Old Glory on more than one occasion. When contacted about his new stance on the good ol' U.S.A., Douglas, a former teacher, didn't mince words.

"I'm sick and tired of listening to these pukes who call themselves Americans," Douglas said. "What are they so proud of? The escalating crime rate? The surging economy that has only divided the very rich from the very poor even more? The wonderful political system that allows crooks and cheats to hold positions of public office? Yeah, Americans sure have a lot to be proud of!"

What happened to make Douglas so bitter toward America? I don't know, but when he re-entered WCW, he promised a revolution. Ladies and gentlemen, whether we like his brand of revolution or not, he's definitely giving us one. Let's just be thankful that he's not teaching American history somewhere.

Well, faithful readers, that about does it for me this month. Until **Disco Inferno, Big Vito, Johnny the Bull, Tony Marinara,** and **The Godfather** land starring roles in the definitive remake of *The Godfather,* I'll be at ringside shooting holes through today's most important news. □

misawa

(Continued from page 37)

No one has won more All-Japan Triple Crowns than Misawa has (five). If one or more of the major American promotions brought him in and he dominated the way he has in All-Japan, he could make an argument that he's the best wrestler of his generation.

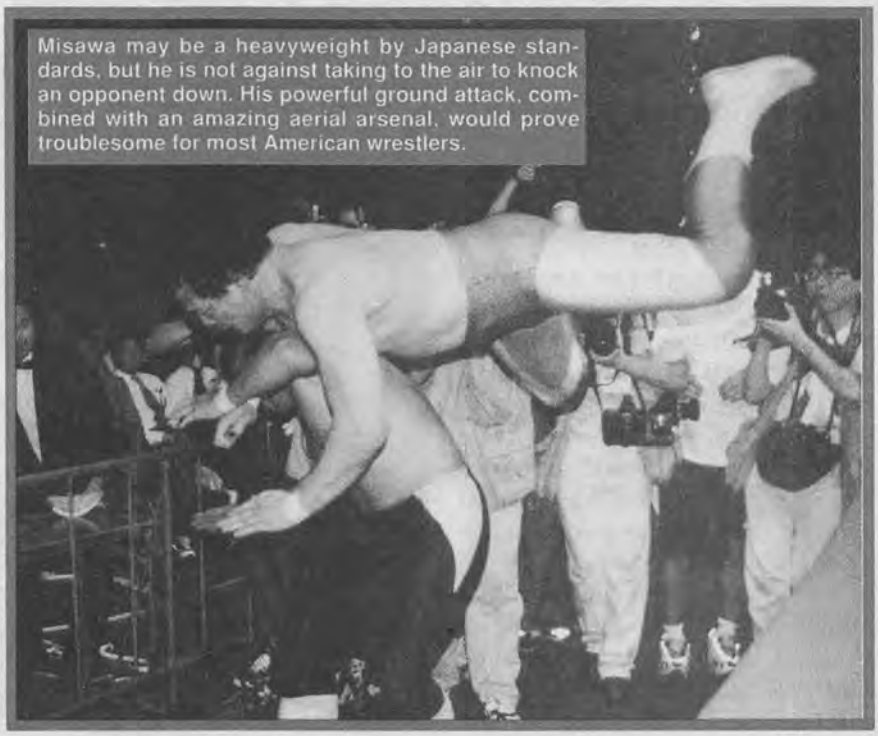
under the leadership of Shohei "Giant" Baba, the company upheld a very strict policy of isolationism. All-Japan wrestlers only appeared in All-Japan rings. Shortly before Baba died in January of last year, he relaxed some of his policies and even allowed Kenta Kobashi and Maunukea Mossman to appear on an FMW card at Kawasaki Stadium. Even then, the idea of an All-Japan wrestler appearing outside the country was unheard of.

Since Baba's death, Misawa has assumed a lot of behind-the-scenes responsibilities. More foreign wrestlers have competed in All-Japan in the past year than ever before. Wrestlers from other promotions have started to appear regularly on All-Japan cards. For the first time in the company's history, the possibility exists for an All-Japan wrestler to appear outside of Asia. If it would be any one man, AJPW President Mitsuharu Misawa would certainly be the one to make it happen.

Now that the business practices of All-Japan could permit Misawa to travel to the United States, the only problem remaining is finding an American promoter to book him. A world-class talent like Misawa would have to be tested against the best American athletes. Men like Austin, Van Dam, Goldberg, and Hart. Misawa has openly expressed interest in wrestling Hart, since the two have faced each other in the past. In the guise of the second Tiger Mask, Misawa once competed against the "Hitman" on a cross-promotional extravaganza hosted by the WWF and All-Japan. The match ended in a time-limit draw.

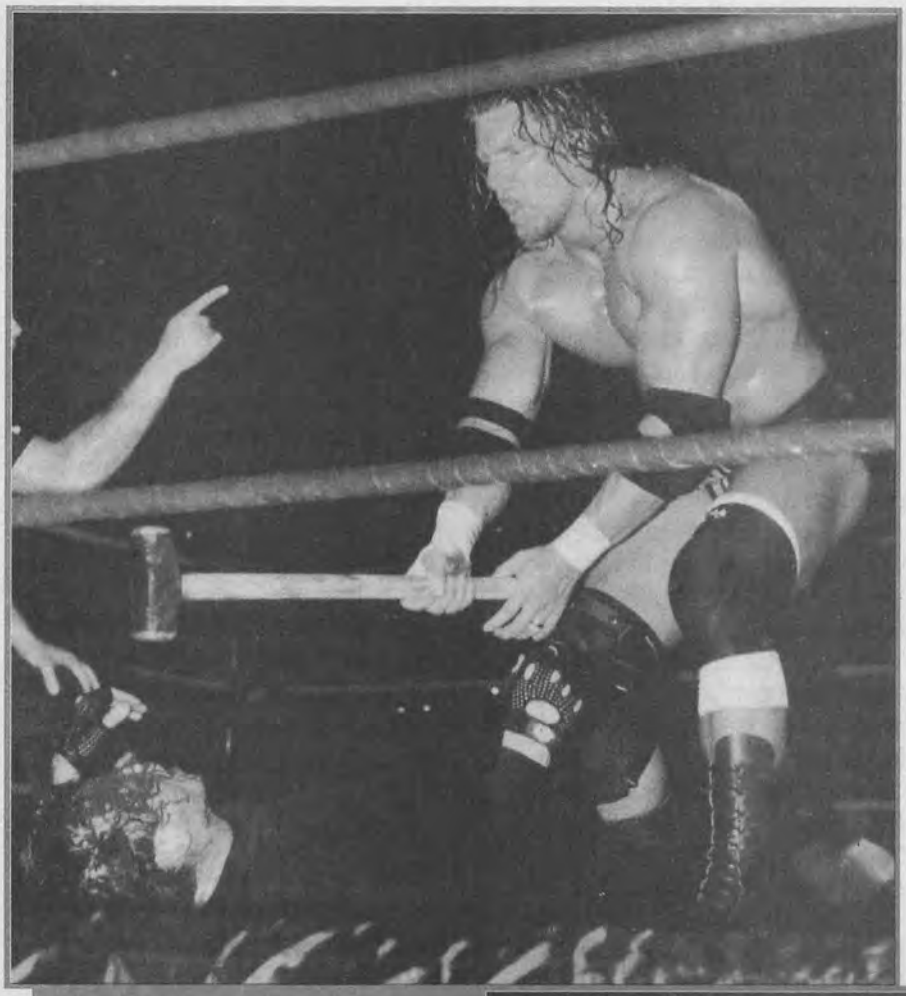
For now, however, American promoters are turning their backs to the Japanese hero. They appear to want no part of Misawa, and they don't want to expose him to American audiences. Some speculate that WCW creative head Vince Russo would not want Misawa to appear in that company since he feels that for the most part, American fans want to watch American wrestlers. As for the WWF, it was publicly denounced by Misawa after the tragic death of Owen Hart for "failing as a wrestling organization. That's why they have put the emphasis on sports entertainment instead."

Misawa is a wrestler in the truest sense of the word. He could very well be the most gifted competitor in the sport today. If the U.S. promoters won't bring him here on his own, maybe it's time American fans raised their voices in unison. Demand the best. We owe it to Misawa, and we owe it to ourselves. □



Misawa may be a heavyweight by Japanese standards, but he is not against taking to the air to knock an opponent down. His powerful ground attack, combined with an amazing aerial arsenal, would prove troublesome for most American wrestlers.

(Continued from page 39)



Vince McMahon felt quite a bit of pain when Triple-H leveled him with a sledgehammer at Armageddon (above). He felt even more when he found out Triple-H and Stephanie McMahon were in cahoots (right).

the middle of it? You saw what happened. He had The Undertaker kidnap her without telling her it was all part of a plan and that she was in no real danger of being harmed. He had The Undertaker go through her personal things and tie her to that symbol. If Steph wasn't such a strong person, she'd probably be in one of those rubber rooms in a mental hospital right now. And Vince is upset that *she* betrayed *him?* We could have made things a lot worse for him, and we still might end up doing that.

HUNTER: As much as I want to be professional and conduct this interview from an objective standpoint, but ...

BROCK: Here we go.

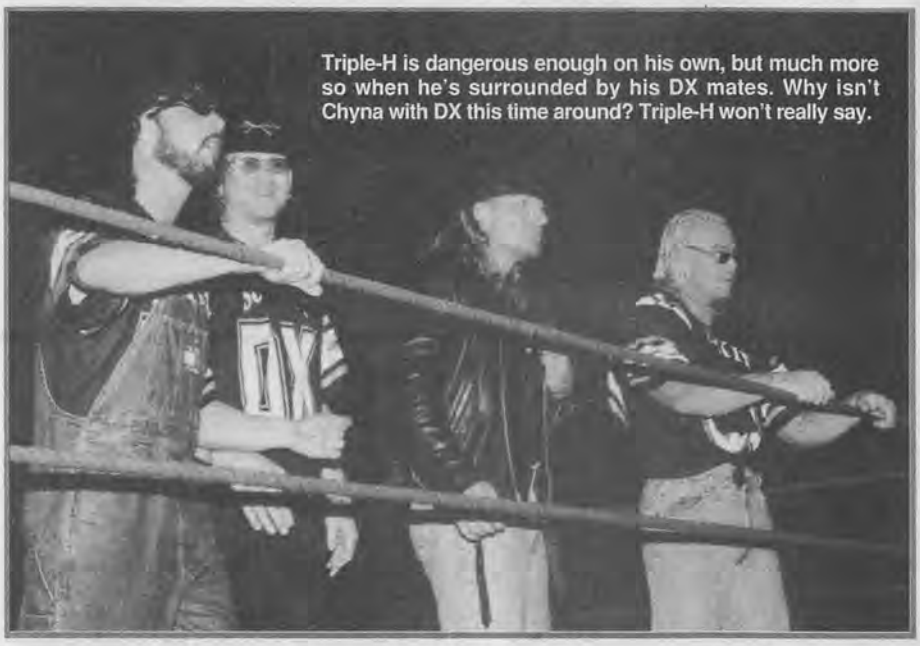
HUNTER: ... you make me sick, Helmsley. How dare you destroy people's lives to try to get yourself over? What you've done is the most despicable thing I've ever seen in this business, and I've seen just about everything. Then you go and try to come up with some justification for what you've done.

TRIPLE-H: *Mee-ow!* What did you prefer, when I nearly crushed Dad's ribcage with a sledgehammer, or when I destroyed Mankind's knees?

MURPHY: So were you behind the Stephanie/Test thing from the get-go? Since that first appeared on GTV, does that mean DX is behind the whole GTV phenomenon?

TRIPLE-H: I can neither confirm nor deny DeGeneration X's involvement in GTV. How's that for you, Murphy?

BROCK: Okay, enough with



Triple-H is dangerous enough on his own, but much more so when he's surrounded by his DX mates. Why isn't Chyna with DX this time around? Triple-H won't really say.

the weddings, and GTV, and ruining lives. This isn't *Days Of Our Lives*. At least it's not supposed to be. Let's talk wrestling. Hunter, how do you beat The Big Show, other than have DX interfere at every turn?

TRIPLE-H: Show's a big man. When you carry as much weight as he does, it makes your knees susceptible. I've got a definite speed advantage over The Big Slow. All I did was shoot in, take him off his feet, and keep him on the mat. I can go all night if I have to. Just ask Steph if you don't believe me, Liz.

HUNTER: That's it. Guys, you're going to have to finish this up without me. *(Liz Hunter abruptly leaves the room. Triple-H laughs for several minutes before regaining his composure.)*

MURPHY: You're a big hit with the ladies, Hunter. The way I see it, you're still on a collision course with The Rock. The two of you have had some real battles over the past two years. How do you plan on keeping the upper hand?

TRIPLE-H: The Rock is a catchphrase-spewing cartoon character with two moves. You steer clear of the Rock bottom and don't let yourself get that ridiculous elbow dropped on your chest and you've got the match won. I don't even consider The Rock to be a threat. Besides, he's off doing comedy routines with that freak Mankind. If he wants to step up to "The Game," let him try.

MURPHY: Worried at all about Steve Austin?

TRIPLE-H: You saw what I did to him at SummerSlam. If actually has the [guts] to come back, I'll just do it again, and maybe next time he won't come back.

BROCK: So what's the deal with you and Chyna? Why isn't she part of your little group anymore?

TRIPLE-H: Don't you worry about me and Chyna? Everything's just fine with me and Chyna. DX is just fine without Chyna.

BROCK: What does the future hold for DX?

TRIPLE-H: Whatever the hell we want it to. You see, Steph and I now have the WWF by the throat. Road Dogg and Billy Gunn are the most dominant tag team in WWF history. X-Pac has his eye on Chris Jericho, a guy he pretty much slapped around before. By the time this rag hits newsstands, and all your dirty little readers throw down the money from their paper routes to read this interview, DeGeneration X will have total control of all the gold in the WWF. Let "The Game" begin. □

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PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

TOP 10

1. **BRET HART**
   235, Calgary, Alberta
   (1) WCW World champion
2. **THE BIG SHOW**
   500, Atlanta, GA
   (4) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
3. **VADER**
   450, Denver, CO
   (2) All-Japan Triple Crown champion
4. **MIKE AWESOME**
   285, Tampa, FL
   (3) ECW World champion
5. **JEFF JARRETT**
   230, Nashville, TN
   (-) WCW U.S. champion
6. **THE ROCK**
   272, Miami, FL
   (9) No. 4 contender: WWF World title
7. **SID VICIOUS**
   318, West Memphis, AR
   (-) No. 2 contender: WCW World title
8. **CHRIS JERICHO**
   225, Vancouver, British Columbia
   (-) Co-WWF Intercontinental champion
9. **KENSUKE SASAKI**
   233, Tokyo, Japan
   (-) IWGP heavyweight champion
10. **ROB VAN DAM**
    237, Battle Creek, MI
    (-) ECW TV champion

Jeff Jarrett

TAG TEAMS

1. **BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES**
   Combined weight: 516 pounds
   (3) WWF World tag team champions
2. **TOMMY DREAMER & RAVEN**
   Combined weight: 480 pounds
   (2) ECW World tag team champions
3. **JUN AKIYAMA & KENTA KOBASHI**
   Combined weight: 491 pounds
   (1) All-Japan International tag team champions
4. **YUJI NAGATA & MANABU NAKANISHI**
   Combined weight: 455 pounds
   (5) IWGP International tag team champions
5. **BRIAN CHRISTOPHER & SCOTT TAYLOR**
   Combined weight: 433 pounds
   (-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
6. **JUSTIN CREDIBLE & LANCE STORM**
   Combined weight: 459 pounds
   (7) No. 1 contenders: ECW World tag title
7. **BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY**
   Combined weight: 585 pounds
   (-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
8. **DON & RON HARRIS**
   Combined weight: 592 pounds
   (-) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
9. **JEFF & MATT HARDY**
   Combined weight: 422 pounds
   (6) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title
10. **DAVID FLAIR & CROWBAR**
    Combined weight: 434 pounds
    (-) WCW World tag team champions

WCW

World Champion:
BRET HART
(C) 235, Calgary, Alberta

1. **JEFF JARRETT** *(4) 230, Nashville, TN*
2. **SID VICIOUS** *(9) 318, West Memphis, AR*
3. **KEVIN NASH** *(-) 356, Detroit, MI*
4. **CHRIS BENOIT** *(3) 218, Edmonton, Alberta*
5. **BUFF BAGWELL** *(-) 240, Marietta, GA*
6. **DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE** *(-) 260, Tampa, FL*
7. **NORMAN SMILEY** *(10) 238, London, England*
8. **MENG** *(6) 294, Tonga*
9. **HACKSAW DUGGAN** *(-) 280, Glens Falls, NY*
10. **VAMPIRO** *(-) 220, Montreal, Quebec*

WWF

World Champion:
TRIPLE-H
(2) 279, Greenwich, CT

1. **CHRIS JERICHO** *(-) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia*
2. **CHYNA** *(1) 201, Nashua, NH*
3. **THE BIG SHOW** *(C) 500, Atlanta, GA*
4. **THE ROCK** *(3) 272, Miami, FL*
5. **KURT ANGLE** *(-) 233, Pittsburgh, PA*
6. **KANE** *(5) 345, parts unknown*
7. **VAL VENIS** *(-) 250, Las Vegas, NV*
8. **X-PAC** *(7) 212, Minneapolis, MN*
9. **AL SNOW** *(8) 232, Lima, OH*
10. **RIKISHI PHATU** *(-) 401, San Francisco, CA*

ECW

World Champion:
MIKE AWESOME
(C) 285, Tampa, FL

1. **ROB VAN DAM** *(1) 237, Battle Creek, MI*
2. **MASATO TANAKA** *(-) 235, Tokyo, Japan*
3. **SPIKE DUDLEY** *(6) 155, Philadelphia, PA*
4. **YOSHIHIRO TAJIRI** *(9) 224, Tokyo, Japan*
5. **SABU** *(3) 225, Bombay*
6. **JERRY LYNN** *(2) 214, Minneapolis, MN*
7. **SUPER CRAZY** *(5) 172, Mexico City, Mexico*
8. **RHINO** *(4) 285, Detroit, MI*
9. **JUSTIN CREDIBLE** *(7) 225, Waterbury, CT*
10. **THE SANDMAN** *(10) 244, Philadelphia, PA*

NWA

NWA Champion:
NAOYA OGAWA
(C) 286, Tokyo, Japan

1. **COLORADO KID** *(-) 231, Colorado Springs, CO*
2. **DOUG GILBERT** *(6) 241, Lexington, TN*
3. **E.Z. RYDER** *(8) 230, Winnipeg, Manitoba*
4. **GARY STEELE** *(9) 241, London, England*
5. **TWIGGY RAMIREZ** *(7) 213, New York, NY*
6. **BIG DON BRODIE** *(10) 325, Jackson, MS*
7. **RICK MICHAELS** *(3) 224, Jacksonville, FL*
8. **BLADE BOUDREAUX** *(-) 230, New Orleans, LA*
9. **MIKE ROSELLI** *(-) 265, Vancouver, British Columbia*
10. **TERRY TAYLOR** *(1) 226, Atlanta, GA*

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

For period ended January 5, 2000

BIG JAPAN PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Shadow WX; 1—Ryuji Yamakawa; 2—Masaoki Honma; 3—Abdullah the Butcher; 4—Mike Samples; 5—Mens Teoh; 6—Winger; 7—Kamikaze; 8—Shumme Matsuzaki; 9—Masayoshi Motegi; 10—Great Kojika.

CAPITOL CITY WRESTLING: Champion—The Madd Chef; 1—Rude Dawg; 2—New York Nightmare; 3—Scott Storm; 4—Tim Storm; 5—Max Riproc; 6—The Reaper; 7—Casino Kid; 8—The Specialist; 9—Jeremy James; 10—Drew Jordon.

EAST COAST WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—J.J. The Ring Crew Guy; 1—Ty Street; 2—J.R. Ryder; 3—Cheetah Master; 4—Ground Zero; 5—Glen Osbourne; 6—Ace Darling; 7—Mr. Ooh La La; 8—Boogie Woogie Brown; 9—Jeff Peterson; 10—Vince Goodnight.

GLOBAL PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Title Vacant; 1—New York Nightmare; 2—Scott Storm; 3—Treach Phillips Jr.; 4—Tim Storm; 5—James Grizzly; 6—Nitetrain C. Crane; 7—Bubba Monroe; 8—Dexter Hardaway; 9—Bill Ash; 10—Tim Vain.

MARYLAND CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Bruiser; 1—Romeo Valentino; 2—Tom Brandi; 3—Julio Fantastico; 4—Gillberg; 5—Gregory Martin; 6—Danny Rose; 7—Cueball Carmichael; 8—Jimmy Cicero; 9—Dino Devine; 10—Corporal Punishment.

MASON DIXON WRESTLING: Champion—Jamie Harris; 1—Punchie McGee; 2—Latin Tornado; 3—Eddie Edmonds; 4—Scotty Blaze; 5—Mason Hunter; 6—Brian Logan; 7—Bob Brown; 8—Bounty Hunter; 9—Chick Scott; 10—Ox Williams.

NORTH AMERICAN WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—The Intimidator; 1—Dorty Reid; 2—Shane Hooker; 3—Bob Ozark; 4—John Stone; 5—Gino Blanchard; 6—Big Willy; 7—Spiffy Stevens; 8—Lady Scorpion; 9—Damian Thunder; 10—Domitri.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Michael Modest; 1—Joe E. Legend; 2—Cheetah Master; 3—Jimi V; 4—Flash Flanagan; 5—Jason Lee; 6—Scott Furie; 7—Vince Goodnight; 8—Ground Zero; 9—Ty Street; 10—Eddie Valentine.

RHODE ISLAND WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Bad News; 1—Danger Boy Alfredo; 2—Wolverine; 3—Pierre the Mountie; 4—Max Brannigan; 5—Danny Cama; 6—Rev. Chune Brannigan; 7—Trip Rider; 8—Mael; 9—Davios; 10—Scott Thomas.

TEXAS CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Tommy Nero; 1—Blake Wiggins; 2—Jeremy Young; 3—Redd Dogg Begnaud; 4—Mace; 5—Beast; 6—Brangus; 7—Masked Italiano; 8—Pendragon; 9—Coach; 10—Bigfoot.

USA PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Sgt. Slaughter; 1—Masked Maniac; 2—Tommy Cairo; 3—King Kong Bundy; 4—Dick Dudley; 5—Jimmy Snuka; 6—Equalizer; 7—Demolition Ax; 8—Jack Sabboth; 9—Ace Darling; 10—Thunderbolt.

XTREME PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Dick Dudley; 1—Damien Steele; 2—Supreme; 3—Johnny Webb; 4—Kid Kaos; 5—Jake Lawless; 6—Kronus; 7—Michael Modest; 8—Donovan Morgan; 9—Carlito Montana; 10—Phenomenal Phil.

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:
KENSUKE SASAKI
(-) 233, Tokyo, Japan

1—MASA CHONO
(1) 235, Tokyo, Japan
2—JUSHIN LIGER
(5) 206, Hiroshima, Japan
3—HIROYOSHI TENZAN
(-) 270, Tokyo, Japan
4—GENICHIRO TENRYU
(2) 235, Fukui, Japan
5—MANABU NAKANISHI
(3) 235, Tokyo, Japan
6—SCOTT NORTON
(-) 360, Minneapolis, MN
7—YUJI NAGATA
(4) 220, Tokyo, Japan
8—SHIRO KOSHINAKA
(-) 225, Tokyo, Japan
9—KEIJI MUTO
(C) 245, Yamanashi, Japan
10—KOJI KANEMOTO
(6) 205, Osaka, Japan

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:
VADER
(C) 450, Denver, CO

1—JUN AKIYAMA
(3) 230, Hiroshima, Japan
2—MITSUHARU MISAWA
(1) 228, Ashikaga, Japan
3—KENTA KOBASHI
(2) 261, Fukuchiyama, Japan
4—TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(-) 245, Ashikaga, Japan
5—AKIRA TAUE
(5) 265, Chichibu, Japan
6—STAN HANSEN
(4) 322, Borger, TX
7—YOSHINARI OGAWA
(6) 202, Tokyo, Japan
8—MIKE BURTON
(9) 256, Austin, TX
9—GARY ALBRIGHT
(-) 343, Billings, MT
10—JOHNNY ACE
(7) 250, San Bernardino, CA

EMLL

EMLL Champion:
UNIVERSO DOS MIL
(-) 240, Mexico City, Mexico

1—RAYO DE JALISCO JR.
(C) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico
2—VILLANO III
(8) 220, Mexico City, Mexico
3—ATLANTIS
(9) 180, Guadalajara, Mexico
4—APOLO DANTES
(-) 215, Guadalajara, Mexico
5—EL HIJO DEL SANTO
(1) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico
6—PIERROTH JR.
(5) 251, Cuernavaca, Mexico
7—SHOCKER
(3) 185, Guadalajara, Mexico
8—ULTIMO GUERRERO
(2) 173, Mexico City, Mexico
9—NEGRO CASAS
(-) 175, Mexico City, Mexico
10—ZUMBIDO
(-) 210, Acapulco, Mexico

AAA

AAA Champion:
LATIN LOVER
(4) 190, Monterrey, Mexico

1—HEAVY METAL
(1) 180, Mexico City, Mexico
2—OCTAGON
(8) 180, Monterrey, Mexico
3—PENTAGON
(-) 175, Pachuca, Mexico
4—ABISMO NEGRO
(-) 210, Pachua, Mexico
5—PERRO AGUAYO JR.
(5) 165, Zacatecas, Mexico
6—HECTOR GARZA
(7) 215, Monterrey, CA
7—BLUE DEMON JR.
(3) 180, Toluca, Mexico
8—CIBERNETICO
(6) 235, Mexico City, Mexico
9—PIRATA MORGAN
(2) 221, Mexico City, Mexico
10—JERRY ESTRADA
(-) 239, Montclova, Mexico

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 22 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important–and respected–ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Bret takes number one, then what? As much as we hated to do it, we placed **Bret Hart's** name atop the ratings again this month. Bret was, after all, WCW World champion for the entire month covered by these ratings. Well, save for a few hours on the night after Starrcade, he was. That's when he gave up the title because he was disgusted by the controversial finish of his match with **Bill Goldberg** at Starrcade. We all know what happened later that night.

We don't approve of Mr. Hart's decision to join the NWO, but we will recognize that he has been a pretty strong WCW champ. That's why he took the top spot.

Then things get complicated. Very complicated.

We didn't make a mistake and place **The Big Show** second instead of the man who supplanted him as WWF World champ, **Triple-H**. You'll notice, in fact, that there is no Triple-H in the Top 10. That also was no mistake. We felt that despite his World title win over Big Show on January 4, he didn't do enough during the month to earn a spot. To be fair, he was bothered by a knee injury for a few weeks after he beat **Vince McMahon** at Armageddon. Regardless, he lost several matches to Show and to **The Rock** at house shows in December and was pinned by Show at *Raw* on December 27 after **Mick Foley** interfered.

Triple-H

On the other hand, prior to his loss to Triple-H (which took place only a few days before these ratings were compiled), Show was on a roll. He earned that second spot.

Right up there with The Road Warriors and Steiners ... After watching what happened in the most recent tournament for the WCW World tag team title, we couldn't help but wonder if **Eric Bischoff** was right when he decided to phase out the World tag team championship a few years ago.

First of all, having a "Lethal Lottery" to decide the pairings for this tournament was a strange idea. Shouldn't the tag team belts go to the wrestlers who work the best as a duo, not wrestlers who are forced to team?

Just a thought.

Somehow, some way, **David Flair** and his new sidekick, **Crowbar**, ended up with the gold when the tourney was over. Now, young Mr. Flair has improved a bit since last year, but as a wrestler, he still seems overmatched against WCW competition. Crowbar, in case you didn't realize it, is the former **Devon Storm**, a man with experience in the WWF, ECW, and many, many independents. Together, they make an interesting and unusual team. They are also in all likelihood not going to be champions for long if they don't get very, very lucky during most of their defenses.

Bottom line is we thought Flair and Crowbar did enough to warrant making the tag team ratings, but only at number 10.

How can two people hold one belt? That **Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley** loves to cause controversy, doesn't she? After WWF Intercontinental champion **Chris Jericho** and former champion **Chyna** pinned each other simultaneously at the December 28 taping of *Smackdown,* she could have made a very safe ruling. She could have held up the title and forced them to wrestle each other for it. Or she could have put the championship up for grabs in a tournament.

She decided to get a little creative instead. She made Jericho and Chyna co-Intercontinental champs. Thanks, Steph. That makes doing the ratings so much more exciting for us.

Chris Jericho

Since we automatically give the top contender spot in the WWF to the I-C champ, we have a problem. The only solution was to give the I-C *champs* the top *two* contender spots in the WWF. As for which one goes first, that was a decision we had to make subjectively. This month, the nod went to Jericho. And it had nothing to do with the fact that Jericho is a man and Chyna is a woman. It had to do with the fact that Jericho had the better month. He defended the I-C belt on nearly every WWF show, while Chyna only took the occasional match after dropping the belt to Y2J. For that reason, we put Jericho in the Top 10 (at number eight) and left Chyna out.

That's all for now. If you have any questions or comments regarding our ratings, we want to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

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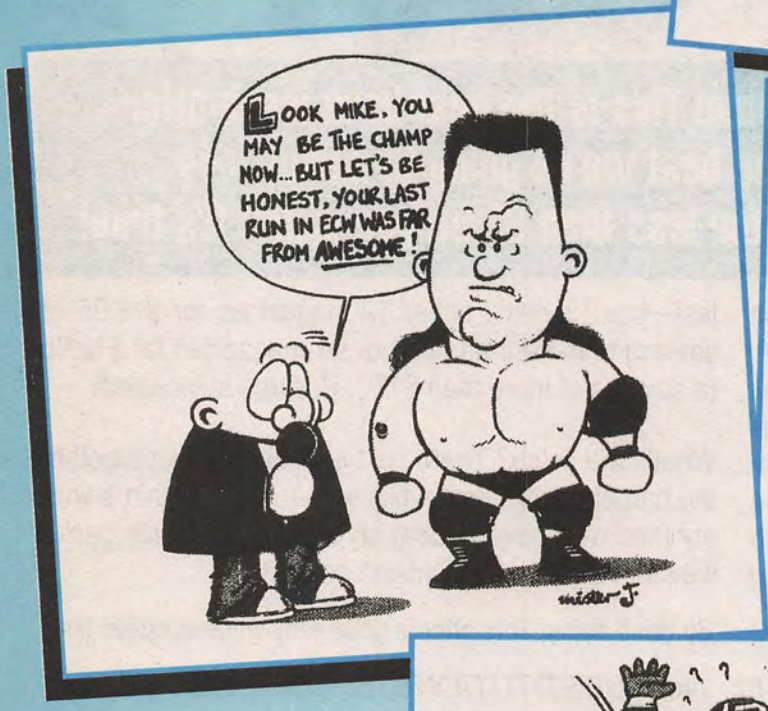
drawing BLOOD

By Jason Conlan



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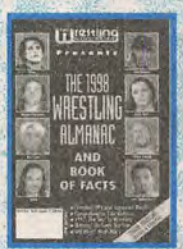

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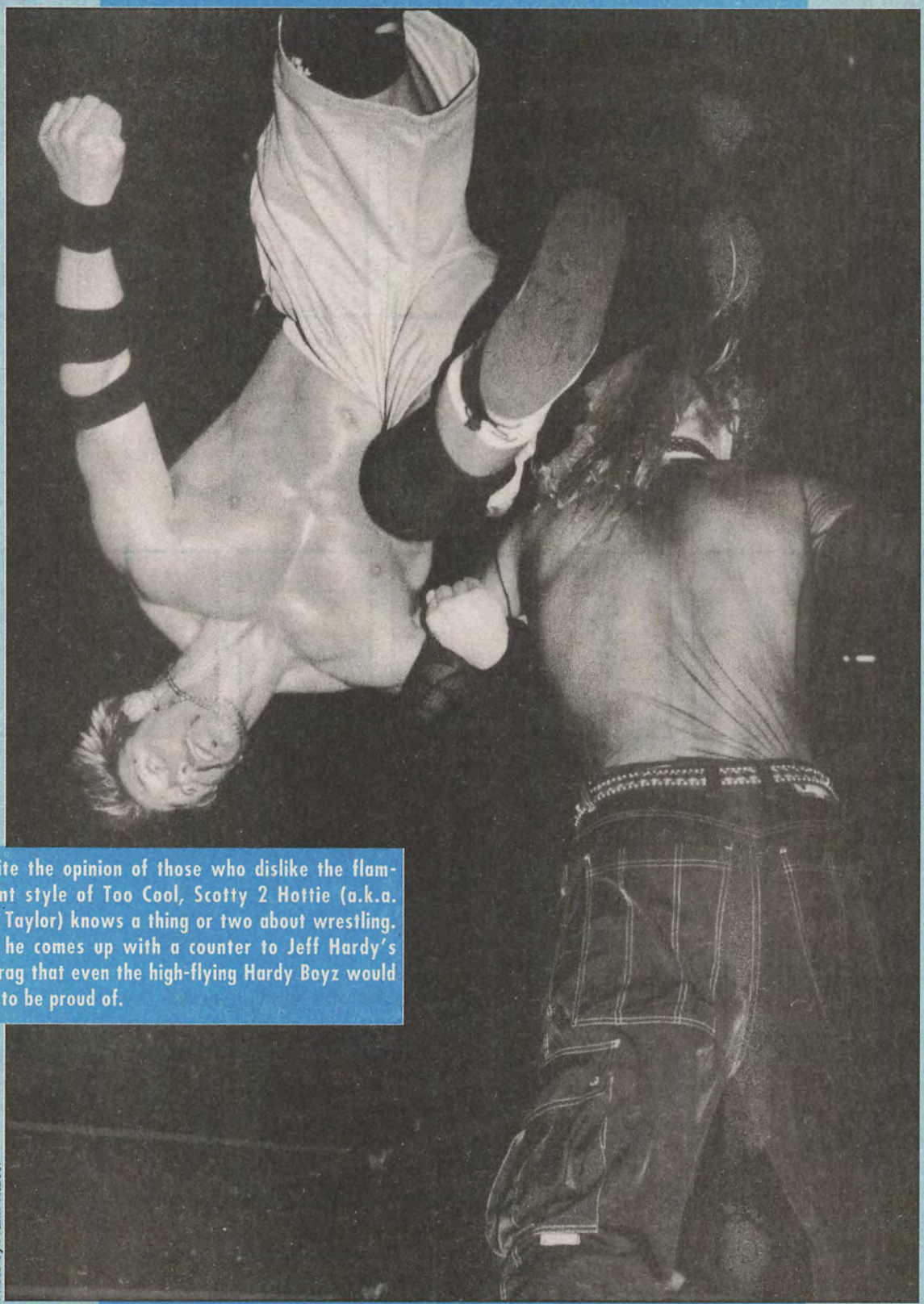
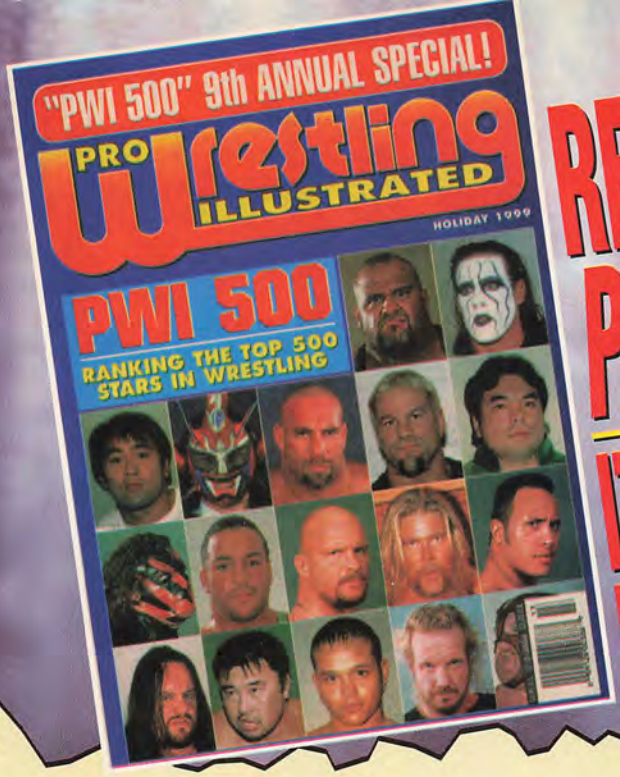


Despite the opinion of those who dislike the flamboyant style of Too Cool, Scotty 2 Hottie (a.k.a. Scott Taylor) knows a thing or two about wrestling. Here he comes up with a counter to Jeff Hardy's armdrag that even the high-flying Hardy Boyz would have to be proud of.

Photo by Frank Vitucci



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